# The Macro Last Day Timeline

Prepared by volunteers from Zion or Bust!

"They did impart the word of God, one with another,
without money and without price" (Alma 1:20).

"Freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8).

Comments and corrections may be sent to AMEnglish@live.com.

Compact Edition

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*"And there began to be men inspired from heaven and sent forth, standing among the people in all the land, preaching and testifying boldly of the sins and iniquities of the people, and testifying unto them concerning the redemption which the Lord would make for his people..."*

*—3 Nephi 6:20*

*"But behold, the righteous that hearken unto the words of the prophets, and destroy them not, but look forward unto Christ with steadfastness for the signs which are given, notwithstanding all persecution—behold, they are they which shall not perish."*

*— 2 Nephi 26:8*

*"And the Book of Mormon and the holy scriptures are given of me for your instruction; and the power of my Spirit quickeneth all things. Wherefore, be faithful, praying always, having your lamps trimmed and burning, and oil with you, that you may be ready at the coming of the Bridegroom—For behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, that I come quickly. Even so. Amen."*

*—Jesus Christ (D&C 33:16–18)*

***I testify that I know the Lord will redeem His people; Israel will shortly be free.***

*I hope all who read this book likewise gain such testimonies themselves.*

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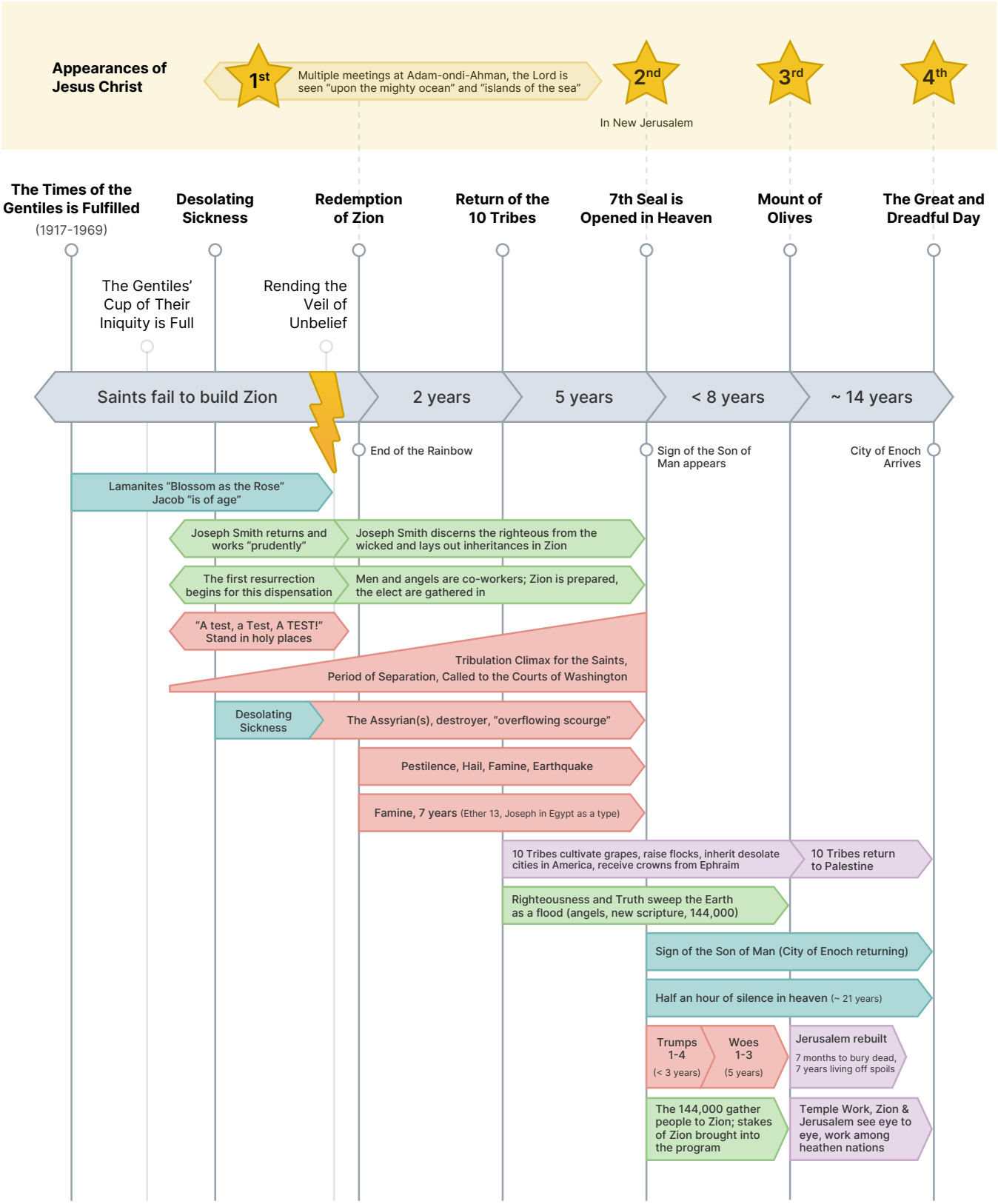
# Introduction

# The Macro Last Day Timeline Overview


Appearances of Jesus Christ
1st
Multiple meetings at Adam-ondi-Ahman, the Lord is seen "upon the mighty ocean" and "islands of the sea"
2nd
In New Jerusalem
3rd
4th
The Times of the Gentiles is Fulfilled
(1917-1969)
Desolating Sickness
Redemption of Zion
Return of the 10 Tribes
7th Seal is Opened in Heaven
Mount of Olives
The Great and Dreadful Day
The Gentiles' Cup of Their Iniquity is Full
Rending the Veil of Unbelief
Saints fail to build Zion
2 years
5 years
< 8 years
~ 14 years
End of the Rainbow
Sign of the Son of Man appears
City of Enoch Arrives
Lamanites "Blossom as the Rose"
Jacob "is of age"
Joseph Smith returns and works "prudently"
Joseph Smith discerns the righteous from the wicked and lays out inheritances in Zion
The first resurrection begins for this dispensation
Men and angels are co-workers; Zion is prepared, the elect are gathered in
"A test, a Test, A TEST!"
Stand in holy places
Tribulation Climax for the Saints,
Period of Separation, Called to the Courts of Washington
Desolating Sickness
The Assyrian(s), destroyer, "overflowing scourge"
Pestilence, Hail, Famine, Earthquake
Famine, 7 years (Ether 13, Joseph in Egypt as a type)
10 Tribes cultivate grapes, raise flocks, inherit desolate cities in America, receive crowns from Ephraim
10 Tribes return to Palestine
Righteousness and Truth sweep the Earth as a flood (angels, new scripture, 144,000)
Sign of the Son of Man (City of Enoch returning)
Half an hour of silence in heaven (~ 21 years)
Trumps 1-4
(< 3 years)
Woes 1-3
(5 years)
Jerusalem rebuilt
7 months to bury dead,
7 years living off spoils
The 144,000 gather people to Zion; stakes of Zion brought into the program
Temple Work, Zion & Jerusalem see eye to eye, work among heathen nations

# Part I: Appearances of Jesus Christ

1st
Multiple meetings at **Adam-ondi-Ahman**; the Lord is seen "upon the mighty ocean" and "islands of the sea" (D&C 133:20)
2nd
New Jerusalem
3rd
Mount of Olives
4th
Great and Dreadful Day

**Doctrines of the Gospel Student Manual**

The Savior will make several appearances before His Second Coming to all the world.

1st 1. Christ will appear at Adam-ondi-Ahman (see Daniel 7:9–10, 13–14; D&C 116).

2nd 2. The Savior will appear to those in the New Jerusalem in America (see 3 Ne. 21:23–25; D&C 45:66–67).

3rd 3. The Savior will appear to the Jews in Jerusalem (see D&C 45:48, 51–53; Zechariah 12:10; 14:2–5).

4th 4. The Lord will appear in glory to all mankind (see D&C 45:44; 101:23; Matthew 24:30; Isaiah 40:5; JST Revelation 1:7).

("Chapter 36: The Lord's Second Coming," *Doctrines of the Gospel Student Manual* (Second edition), 2010)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

4th Before the Lord Jesus descends openly and publicly in the clouds of glory, attended by all the hosts of heaven; before the great and dreadful day of the Lord sends terror and destruction from one end of the earth to the other;

3rd before he stands on Mount Zion, or sets his feet on Olivet,

2nd or utters his voice from an American Zion or a Jewish Jerusalem; before all flesh shall see him together; before any of his appearances, which taken together comprise the second coming of the Son of God—

1st before all these, there is to be a secret appearance to selected members of his Church. He will come in private to his prophet and to the apostles then living. Those who have held keys and powers and authorities in all ages from Adam to the present will also be present.

(*The Millennial Messiah,* pp. 578–79)

**Charles W. Penrose**

2nd [Christ's] next appearance [after his appearance in New Jerusalem]

3rd will be among the distressed and nearly vanquished sons of Judah. At the crisis of their fate, when the hostile troops of several nations are ravaging the city and all the horrors of war are overwhelming the people of Jerusalem, he will set his feet upon the Mount of Olives, which will cleave and part asunder at his touch. Attended by a host from heaven, he will overthrow and destroy the combined armies of the Gentiles, and appear to the worshipping Jews as the mighty Deliverer and Conquerer so long expected by their race; and while love, gratitude, awe, and admiration swell their bosoms, the Deliverer will show them the tokens of his crucifixion and disclose himself as Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had reviled and whom their fathers put to death. Then will unbelief depart from their souls, and "the blindness in part which has happened unto Israel" be removed. ...

4th The great and crowning advent of the Lord will be subsequent to these two appearances; but who can describe it in the language of mortals? The tongue of man falters, and the pen drops from the hand of the writer, as the mind is rapt in contemplation of the sublime and awful majesty of his coming to take vengeance on the ungodly and to reign as King of the whole earth.

He comes! The earth shakes, and the tall mountains tremble; the mighty deep rolls back to the north as in fear, and the rent skies glow like molten brass. He comes! The dead Saints burst forth from their tombs, and "those who are alive and remain" are "caught up" with them to meet him. The ungodly rush to hide themselves from his presence, and call upon the quivering rocks to cover them. He comes! with all the hosts of the righteous glorified. The breath of his lips strikes death to the wicked. His glory is a consuming fire. The proud and rebellious are as stubble; they are burned and "left neither root nor branch." He sweeps the earth "as with the besom of destruction." He deluges the earth with the fiery floods of his wrath, and the filthiness and abominations of the world are consumed. Satan and his dark hosts are taken and bound—the prince of the power of the air has lost his dominion, for He whose right it is to reign has come, and "the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ."

("The Second Advent," *Millennial Star,* 10 Sept. 1859, 583; referenced in "Enrichment I: The Battle of Armageddon: A Prophetic View," *Old Testament Student Manual 1 Kings-Malachi* (Third edition), 2003, p. 295)

**Ezra Taft Benson**

Last, I Name As a Mark of His Divinity His Promised Coming.

He told the Twelve, "I go to prepare a place for you.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, *I will come again."* (John 14:2–3; italics added.)

As the time of His departure drew nigh, He took them to a place outside of Bethany. There He imparted His last instructions and blessing to the Twelve. He then arose "while they beheld" and ascended to heaven, and two heavenly messengers appeared and spoke: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, *shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."* (Acts 1: 9–11; italics added.)

Since that day, 19 centuries have come and gone. Because He has not yet come, some scoffingly say, as Peter prophesied, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Pet. 3:4).

Before He comes, the testimony of the servants of God will be rejected, by and large. Because of this rejection, great calamities will befall the nations of the world, for the Lord Himself has declared:

"For after your testimony cometh the testimony of earthquakes, that shall cause groanings in the midst of her, and men shall fall upon the ground and shall not be able to stand.

"And also cometh the testimony of the voice of thunderings, and the voice of lightnings, and the voice of tempests, and the voice of the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds.

"And all things shall be in commotion; and surely, men's hearts shall fail them; for fear shall come upon all people." (D&C 88:89–91.)

"And there shall be men standing in that generation, that shall not pass until they shall see an overflowing scourge; for a desolating sickness shall cover the land.

***The reason why President Benson believed that this was an important message to proclaim to this generation of single adults, and why he also proclaimed "this is a marked generation" [In His Steps, 1988], is because he understood the prophecy regarding the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled.***

"But my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die.

"And there shall be earthquakes also in divers places, and many desolations; yet men will harden their hearts against me, and they will take up the sword, one against another, and they will kill one another." (D&C 45:31–33.)

The world will present a scene of conflict such as has never been experienced before. Still, men's hearts will be hardened to the revelations from heaven. Even greater signs shall then be given to manifest the approaching great day of the Lord.

"And they shall see signs and wonders, for they shall be shown forth in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath.

"And they shall behold blood, and fire, and vapors of smoke.

"And before the day of the Lord shall come, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall be turned into blood, and the stars fall from heaven." (D&C 45:40–42.)

I realize this is not a pleasant picture. I take no delight in its portrayal, nor do I look forward to the day when calamities shall come upon mankind. But these words are not my own; the Lord has spoken them. Knowing what we know as His servants, can we hesitate to raise a warning voice to all who will listen that they may be prepared for the days ahead?

Silence in the face of such calamity is sin!

But, there is a bright side to an otherwise gloomy picture—the coming of our Lord in all His glory. His coming will be both glorious and terrible, depending on the spiritual condition of those who remain.

2nd His first appearance will be to the righteous Saints who have gathered to the New Jerusalem. In this place of refuge they will be safe from the wrath of the Lord, which will be poured out without measure on all nations.

Modern revelation provides this description:

"And the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion.

"And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety.

"And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another." (D&C 45:67–69.)

3rd The second appearance of the Lord will be to the Jews. To these beleaguered sons of Judah, surrounded by hostile Gentile armies, who again threaten to overrun Jerusalem, the Savior—their Messiah—will appear and set His feet on the Mount of Olives, "and it shall cleave in twain, and the earth shall tremble, and reel to and fro, and the heavens also shall shake" (D&C 45:48).

The Lord Himself will then rout the Gentile armies, decimating their forces (see Ezek. 38, 39). Judah will be spared, no longer to be persecuted and scattered. The Jews will then approach their Deliverer and ask, "What are these wounds in thine hands and in thy feet?

"... I will say unto them: These wounds are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. I am he who was lifted up. I am Jesus that was crucified. I am the Son of God.

"And then shall they weep because of their iniquities; then shall they lament because they persecuted their king." (D&C 45:51–53.)

What a touching drama this will be! Jesus—Prophet, Messiah, King—will be welcomed in His own country!

Jerusalem will become an eternal city of peace!

The sons of Judah will then realize this promise:

"After their pain (the tribe of Judah) shall be sanctified in holiness before the Lord, to dwell in his presence day and night, forever and ever" (D&C 133:35).

4th The third appearance of Christ will be to the rest of the world. Here is His description of His Coming:

"And the Lord shall be red in his apparel, and his garments like him that treadeth in the wine-vat.

"And so great shall be the glory of his presence that the sun shall hide his face in shame, and the moon shall withhold its light, and the stars shall be hurled from their places." (D&C 133:48–49.)

All nations will see Him "in the clouds of heaven, clothed with power and great glory; with all the holy angels; ...

"And the Lord shall utter his voice, and all the ends of the earth shall hear it; and the nations of the earth shall mourn, and they that have laughed shall see their folly.

"And calamity shall cover the mocker, and the scorner shall be consumed; and they that have watched for iniquity shall be hewn down and cast into the fire." (D&C 45:44, 49–50.)

Yes, come He will!

He will come in a day of wickedness, a time when men and women will be "eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage" (Matt. 24:38).

He will come at a time of great upheaval and tribulation when the "whole earth shall be in commotion" (D&C 45:26).

He will come at a time when the Jewish nation is faced with extermination.

He will come as a thief in the night—when the world least expects Him to come.

"But of that day, and hour, no one knoweth; no, not the angels of God in heaven, but my Father only" (JS–M 1:40).

Today, I gratefully bear testimony to the marks which bear witness to His divinity: His divine birth, His ministry, His resurrection, His atoning sacrifice, His promised coming.

I testify of His great love and condescension for all our Father's children, and His willingness to receive all who will come to partake of this goodness and mercy.

Yes, as the Book of Mormon testifies, "he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto [him]" (2 Ne. 26:33).

God bless you, the youth of Zion, to believe and to be valiant in your testimony of Him whom we declare to the world to be our Lord, our Master, our Savior, our Redeemer, our God. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

("Five Marks of the Divinity of Jesus Christ," *New Era,* December 1980)

**Hyrum Andrus**

Christ's appearance [at the Great and Dreadful day] will be the consummating event in a ***series of events*** that will lead to the establishment of the Lord's universal kingdom and the renewal of the earth to paradisiacal glory.

1st Christ's "presence," for example, will be with the Saints who go to establish the center place of the New Jerusalem (D&C 103:15–20). Then, after the ten lost tribes have returned, Moroni explained, Jesus will "come to Zion." He will also come to the great council at Adam-ondi-Ahman, where he will be given "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, *should* serve him"—not that they will then do so, but in preparation for his millennial reign (Daniel 7:14; emphasis added).

2nd When the work of the 144,000 great high priests is sufficiently complete in gathering the righteous into the Church of the Firstborn (D&C 77:11), Jesus will come to his temple in the New Jerusalem to place the capstone on his eternal gospel family and gather all things in one (D&C 42:36; Revelation 14:1–5).

3rd Jesus will then appear to the Jews, to redeem them as a nation and to establish Jerusalem as the other central city, besides Mount Zion, of his millennial kingdom.

4th Having established his law and his program of Zion among Israel on earth by these earlier visits, Jesus will then appear to the world in glory to cleanse it of wickedness (D&C 101:23–35) and to make his kingdom universal. In quoting the fourth chapter of Malachi, Moroni rendered the first verse thus: "For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall burn as stubble; for *they that come* shall burn them, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch" (JS–H 1:37; emphasis added). This rendition indicates that when Christ comes to the world in glory, he will not come alone. By revelation to Joseph Smith the Lord declared that he would reveal himself "from heaven with power and great glory, with all the hosts thereof" (D&C 29:11; emphasis added). In the Bible, Malachi's statement does not indicate how the wicked will be burned, but Moroni and revelations to Joseph Smith make it clear that the wicked will be consumed by the glory of Christ and of those who accompany him when the Lord appears in the clouds of heaven (D&C 29:11–12, 21).

("Chapter 14: The Prophetic Vision of the Last Days," *Moroni's Visit*)

**(H–10) Christ's Appearance to Mankind**

When the Lord returns He will make some appearances to specific groups and then culminate His return by His appearance in great power, majesty, and glory, in such a manner that all the world will see Him (see D&C 133:17–22 and 101:22–23). Four appearances of the Lord have had particular mention by the prophets: two of these appearances will be to the Saints; one appearance will be to the Jews; and the fourth will be His final coming to the world.

2nd *The appearance at the city of New Jerusalem.* The Lord "shall suddenly come to his temple" (D&C 133:2), a temple yet to be built in Jackson County, Missouri (see D&C 84:1–5; 97:10, 15–16). **Elder Charles W. Penrose** said that the Lord would make His appearance first among the Saints and "that appearance will be unknown to the rest of mankind. He will come to the Temple prepared for him, and his faithful people will behold his face, hear his voice, and gaze upon his glory. From his own lips they will receive further instructions for the development and beautifying of Zion and for the extension and sure stability of his Kingdom." (*Millennial Star,* 10 Sept. 1859, pp. 582–83.)

1st *The appearance at Adam-ondi-Ahman.* The Lord will appear to the Saints at a great sacrament meeting at Adam-ondi-Ahman in Daviess County, Missouri, attended by those who have held the keys of the priesthood during all the gospel dispensations and by faithful Saints from all ages. The Prophet **Joseph Smith** said that "Daniel in his seventh chapter speaks of the Ancient of Days; he means the oldest man, our father Adam, Michael, he will call his children together and hold a council with them to prepare them for the coming of the Son of Man. He (Adam) is the father of the human family and presides over the spirits of all men, and all that have had the keys must stand before him in this grand council." (*History of the Church,* 3:386–87; see also D&C 116.)

**Elder Joseph Fielding Smith** wrote: "Not many years hence there shall be another gathering of high priests and righteous souls in this same valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman. At this gathering Adam, the Ancient of Days, will again be present. At this time the vision which Daniel saw will be enacted. The Ancient of Days will sit. There will stand before him those who have held the keys of all dispensations, who shall render up their stewardship to the first patriarch of the race, who holds the keys of salvation. This shall be a day of judgment and preparation.

"In this council Christ will take over the reins of government, officially, on the earth, and the kingdom and dominions, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the saints of the Most High. ...

"Until this grand council is held, Satan shall hold rule in the nations of the earth; but at that time thrones are to be cast down and man's rule shall come to an end. ... Then shall he give the government to the saints of the Most High. ...

"[This council] shall precede the coming of Jesus Christ as a thief in the night, unbeknown to all the world." (*Way to Perfection,* pp. 289–91.)

**President Lorenzo Snow**, speaking of those who will be living in Jackson County at that time, said: "If you will not have seen the Lord Jesus at that time you may expect Him very soon, to see him, to eat and drink with Him, to shake hands with Him and to invite him to your houses as He was invited when He was here before" (*Deseret News,* 15 June 1901, p. 1).

3rd *The appearance at the Mount of Olives.* The Savior's appearance to the Jews will occur when Jerusalem and its environs are besieged by many nations. At the close of a long and costly war, known as the battle of Armageddon, the Jews will flee for safety to the Mount of Olives. There the Savior will make His appearance. (See D&C 45:48–53; 77:15; 133:35; Revelation 11:1–13; Zechariah 14:1–9).

**Elder Parley P. Pratt** summarized the events associated with that appearance: "Zechariah, chapter 14, has told us much concerning the great battle and overthrow of the nations that fight against Jerusalem, and he has said, in plain words, that the Lord shall come at the very time of the overthrow of that army; yes, in fact, even while they are in the act of taking Jerusalem, and have already succeeded in taking one-half the city, spoiling their houses, and ravishing their women. Then, behold, their long-expected Messiah, suddenly appearing, shall stand upon the Mount of Olives, a little east of Jerusalem, to fight against those nations and deliver the Jews. Zechariah says the Mount of Olives shall cleave in twain, from east to west, and one-half of the mountain shall remove to the north while the other half falls off to the south, suddenly forming a very great valley into which the Jews shall flee for protection from their enemies as they fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah; while the Lord cometh and all the saints with Him. Then will the Jews behold that long, long-expected Messiah, coming in power to their deliverance, as they always looked for him. He will destroy their enemies, and deliver them from trouble at the very time they are in the utmost consternation, and about to be swallowed up by their enemies. But what will be their astonishment when they are about to fall at the feet of their Deliverer and acknowledge him their Messiah! They discover the wounds which were once made in his hands, feet, and side; and on inquiry, at once recognize Jesus of Nazareth, the King of

the Jews, the man so long rejected. Well did the prophet say, they shall mourn and weep, every family apart, and their wives apart. But, thank heaven, there will be an end to their mourning; for he will forgive their iniquities and cleanse them from uncleanness. Jerusalem shall be a holy city from that time forth." (*Voice of Warning,* pp. 32–33.)

4th *The Second Coming: the appearance to the whole world.* As the Lord's Second Coming approaches, signs will mark this epochal event. One of the last of these signs is the sign of the Son of Man (see D&C 88:93; JS—M 1:36). The Prophet **Joseph Smith** said: "Then will appear one grand sign of the Son of Man in heaven. But what will the world do? They will say it is a planet, a comet, &c. But the Son of Man will come as the sign of the coming of the Son of Man, which will be as the light of the morning cometh out of the east." (*History of the Church,* 5:337.)

Following the sign there will be "silence in heaven for the space of half an hour, and immediately after shall the curtain of heaven be unfolded" and the Lord will make His appearance (D&C 88:95). So great will be the glory and power of His coming that the earth will tremble, the sun shall hide his face in shame, the mountains will melt and flow down, and the waters of the seas will boil (see D&C 133:40–42, 49; 101:25). All that is corruptible will be consumed and destroyed by the brightness of His presence (see D&C 5:19; 101:24–25). The Lord will wear red clothing, signifying His great atoning sacrifice and also His judgments upon the wicked (see D&C 133:48–51).

At this long-awaited day the Lord's people will receive the reward for their faithfulness and endurance (see D&C 54:10; 133:52–53). Both the righteous living and the celestial dead will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air to be rewarded according to their deeds while the wicked are destroyed and cast into outer darkness (see D&C 88:96–97; 101:89–91). This will be the "great and dreadful day of the Lord" (D&C 110:14, 16).

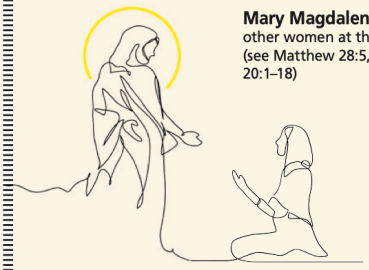
("Enrichment H: The Last Days," *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual,* 2001, p. 404)

In the **April 2021 *Liahona* magazine,** the Church put out the following. Note carefully the section entitled "Future."

## He Is Risen:
### Who Saw and Will See the Resurrected Christ

Here are some of the people who saw the Lord after He conquered death. How does knowing that others have seen the resurrected Savior strengthen your faith in Him? What spiritual experiences have confirmed to you the truth of His Resurrection?

**AD 33**



**Mary Magdalene** and other women at the tomb (see Matthew 28:5, 9; John 20:1–18)

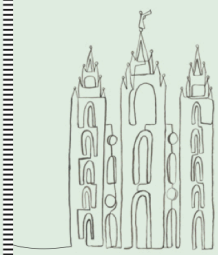
**Disciples** in Galilee (see John 20:24–29)

**Over 500 people** at once (see 1 Corinthians 15:6)

**About 2,500 Nephites** at the temple at Bountiful (see 3 Nephi 11:10–17)

**Lost 10 Tribes** of Israel (see 3 Nephi 17:4)

**PRESENT DAY (1820s ONWARD)**



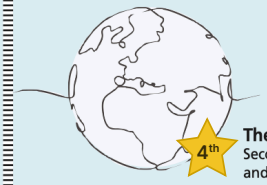
*September 2, 1898*
**President Lorenzo Snow** in the Salt Lake Temple

*Spring 1820*
**Joseph Smith** in New York (see Joseph Smith—History 1:16–20)

*February 16, 1832*
**Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon** in Hiram, Ohio (see Doctrine and Covenants 76:19–24)

*April 3, 1836*
**Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery** in the Kirtland Temple (see Doctrine and Covenants 110:1–10)

**FUTURE**



1st **Those at Adam-ondi-Ahman** (see Doctrine and Covenants 27:5–14; 116:1)

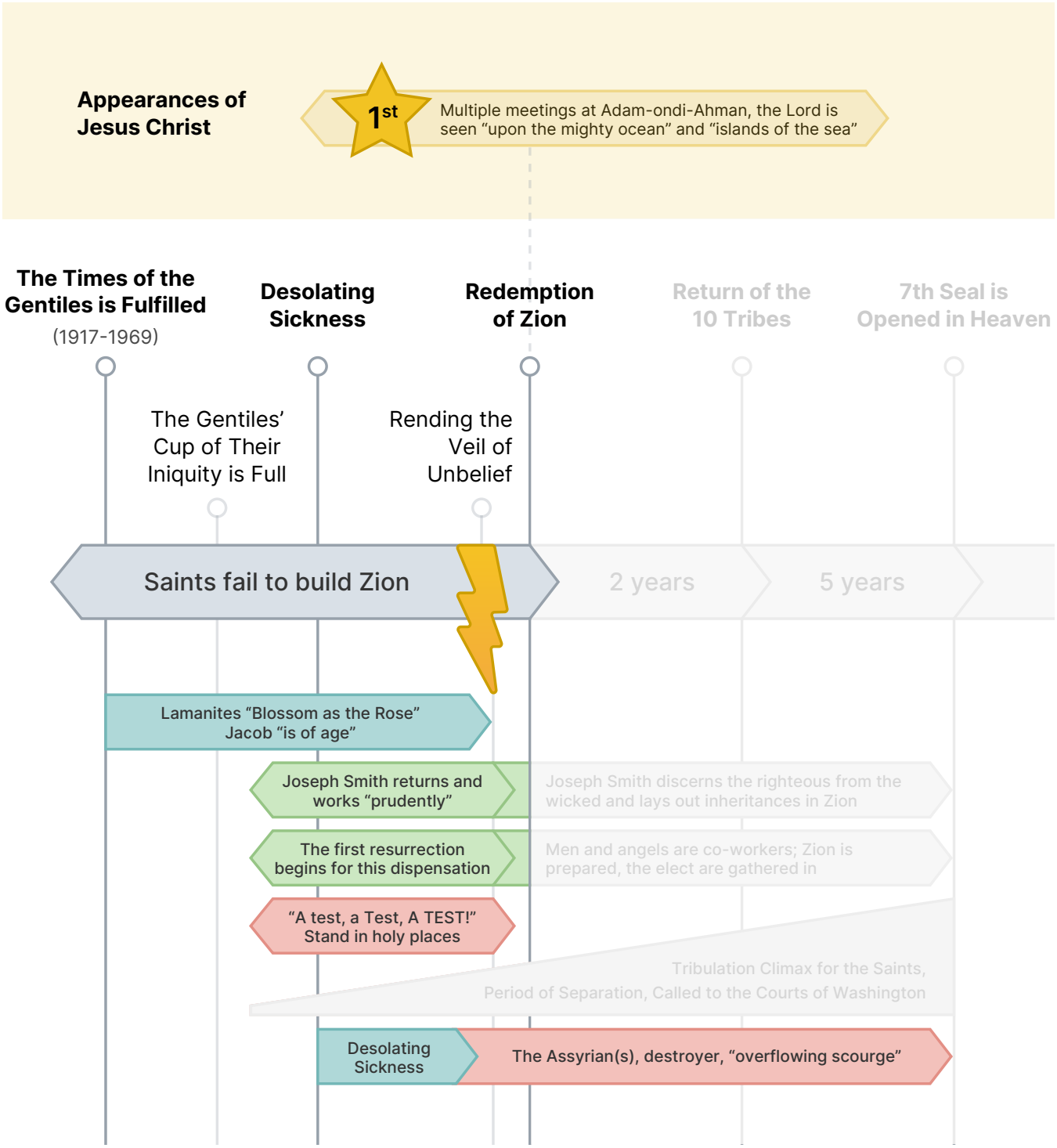
2nd **Those in New Jerusalem** in America (see Doctrine and Covenants 45:66–67)

3rd **The Jews in Jerusalem** (see Doctrine and Covenants 45:48, 51–53)

4th **The whole world** at the Second Coming (see Doctrine and Covenants 101:23)

ILLUSTRATION OF SALT LAKE TEMPLE BY HANNAH CRUZ

# Part II: The Restoration—The Redemption of Zion


Appearances of Jesus Christ
1st
Multiple meetings at Adam-ondi-Ahman, the Lord is seen "upon the mighty ocean" and "islands of the sea"
The Times of the Gentiles is Fulfilled
(1917-1969)
Desolating Sickness
Redemption of Zion
Return of the 10 Tribes
7th Seal is Opened in Heaven
The Gentiles' Cup of Their Iniquity is Full
Rending the Veil of Unbelief
Saints fail to build Zion
2 years
5 years
Lamanites "Blossom as the Rose"
Jacob "is of age"
Joseph Smith returns and works "prudently"
Joseph Smith discerns the righteous from the wicked and lays out inheritances in Zion
The first resurrection begins for this dispensation
Men and angels are co-workers; Zion is prepared, the elect are gathered in
"A test, a Test, A TEST!"
Stand in holy places
Tribulation Climax for the Saints,
Period of Separation, Called to the Courts of Washington
Desolating Sickness
The Assyrian(s), destroyer, "overflowing scourge"

## 1. Saints Fail to Build Zion and Subsequently Redeem Her

The Lord told the Saints in Doctrine and Covenants 84 that the New Jerusalem (Zion) will be built in Missouri (vv. 1–5), and later in the revelation, the Lord gives warnings against those who reject the gospel (vv. 92–97). The Saints rejected the fulness of the gospel (Celestial law, D&C 45:28–29), and in consequence of that, they were driven from Jackson County, Missouri (D&C 101:1–8). The Lord then told the Saints that he could redeem and make Jackson County a city of Holiness at any time (D&C 105:1–2). This teaches us that Zion could have been redeemed at any time if the Saints had become righteous enough.

The Saints were driven to the mountains to gain experience and become righteous enough so as to qualify for the redemption (D&C 105:9–11). In this, the Lord commands the Saints to learn their duty so as to live the laws required for the redemption of Zion and the building of New Jerusalem. Brigham Young taught us that all it would take is a year for the Saints to get themselves ready (JD 11:300). The Lord warned however, if the Saints failed to live the gospel, if they failed to redeem Zion, if they failed to read, understand, and live the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants, that "there remained a scourge" (D&C 84 54–58), and that it will be poured out, as the Lord says, "first upon My house, first among those among you who profess to know me and know me not" (D&C 112:24–26). We learn that "to know the Savior," or to "know the Savior's voice" is to know the scriptures (D&C 84:43–53)—with a focus on The Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants.

The Saints' time to get themselves ready runs out when the Gentiles' cup of iniquity is full. In D&C 101, with the Parable of the Nobleman and the Olive Trees, we learn that if we had built the tower (New Jerusalem), the destroyer would not have come. So the ultimate failure is the failure to build the tower (i.e., redeem Zion and build New Jerusalem).

## 2. Times of the Gentiles is Fulfilled

The times of the Gentiles began with Peter (*New Testament Student Manual,* p. 180; President Joseph Fielding Smith, Conference Report, April 1966, 13). The times of the Gentiles reaching its fulness did not occur until Joseph Smith's life (JS–H 1:41, D&C 35:17, D&C 45:28). The times of the Gentiles were fulfilled between 1917–1967. We know this, for the Lord prophesied that the Jews wouldn't return to Jerusalem until after "the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (JST Luke 21:20–24, 32). Thus, "the generation in which the times of the gentiles [was] fulfilled" (JST Luke 21:25) can be identified.

The Lord promised a lot of things to "this generation," the most spectacular being that they will not all pass before seeing all things, i.e., the second coming of Jesus Christ. This was ***the*** sign the Savior gave for those to look for with regards to the Savior's return. This generation was also promised to witness the times of the Gentiles ending, which happens at the Mount of Olives (*Old Testament Student Manual 1 Kings-Malachi,* p. 293; *A Voice of Warning,* p. 33).

## 3. The Lamanites Blossom as the Rose

This prophesy from the Lord, found in 3 Nephi 21:1–7 (D&C 3:16–20, D&C 49:24), is also one of ***the*** signs given to know that the next major signs and events were going to happen (3 Ne. 21:8–28). The "Lamanites" consist of anyone of literal ancestral descent ***and*** those adopted into the tribe of Manasseh. So simply put, "Lamanites blossom[ing] as the rose" would be membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from the tribe of Manasseh exploding—this, once again, includes both literal and adopted (3 Ne. 21:22).

## 4. The Gentiles' Cup of Iniquity is Full

The Lord said that certain events would not start to transpire until the Gentiles' cup of their iniquity is full (D&C 101:11). The Lord also said that He would not suffer there to be a king in this land (America) for the Lord is the King (2 Ne. 10:11–14). Prophets of God warned again and again of society's gradual decay and the consequences of not repenting and thus reaching the point of the cup of their iniquity being full.

In the 1970's, President Kimball warned that the choice currently before the nation (to serve God, or as President Nelson put it, "let God prevail") would determine the nation's fate ("The Foundations of Righteousness," *Ensign,* Nov. 1977). In 1995, we were warned that the choice we were then making as a nation, as well as a church membership, would bring about "the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets" (The Family: A Proclamation to the World), and in 2015 we sealed our fate (legalizing homosexual marriage), making the cup of our iniquity full. As Brother Hyrum Andrus put it, "The Lord has said he is going to [cleanse America when the cup of their iniquity is full], and unless he wants to offer an apology to Sodom and Gomorrah, he's going to have to do it." (Hyrum Andrus, Lecture 7 Nephi's Prophecy of the Last Days #1). The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was homosexuality (Isaiah 3:9–11, Jude 1:7), and the destruction of the cities was "an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly" (2 Peter 2:6). Today we continue to wrap our arms around sin and Babylon and forsake Celestial law.

Another key component to "the cup of iniquity being full" is tied to the rising generation not being said to have a fair chance to choose between the light and the darkness (Elder Ezra Taft Benson, "Satan's Thrust—Youth," *Ensign,* December 1971).

## 5. Desolating Sickness

Elder McConkie said, "an overflowing scourge shall cover the earth AND a desolating sickness shall sweep the land" ("Stand Independent above All Other Creatures," April 1979). This is taken from D&C 45:31. Isaiah further clarifies, "what will ye do in the day of visitation (scourge)?" and "what will ye do in the day of the desolation (sickness) which shall come from far?" (2 Ne. 20:3, Isaiah 10:3).

So we learn from Isaiah that the sickness originates, or will come, from outside of Ephraim. I would also point out that Isaiah was familiar with Gentile and Jew terminology, and he failed to use it here, meaning "far" most assuredly is a reference from Isaiah to heathen nations. We know, due to the collection of scriptures surrounding this sickness, that it paves the way for the scourge in America (Isaiah 28). We also learn that the sickness and scourge are to be "vexations, only to understand the report" (Isaiah 28:19). The sickness and scourge are not the 7 angels/vials/plagues to be poured out, because those are designed to sweep (kill) people off the land; they're not just vexations.

The sign that Jesus gave to the Jews in Jerusalem to know when the Jews' scourging and destruction would kickstart was that a specific generation would live to see Jerusalem "compassed with armies" (Luke 21:20, D&C 45:19–21). The Lord similarly warned that when the generation in which the times of gentiles was fulfilled lived to see a desolating sickness sweep the land, they would likewise know that scourging and destruction would be imminent (D&C 45:30–33).

## 6. Overflowing Scourge

The term *scourge* is used doctrinally almost exclusively as a "whip," and is used contextually by the Lord almost entirely to mean one group of people oppressing or vexing another group of people (see LDS Topical Guide for "scourge"). Joseph Smith, whenever talking about "the scourge," said to "flee from it" (*TPJS,* pp. 17–18). You can't flee from a sickness; in fact, fleeing from a city with the sickness/plague/etc. to another "clean" city is exactly how you spread it—it is counterintuitive.

The scourge is exactly what the Savior said it would be in 3 Nephi 20:28: one group scourging another.

The Lord also identifies the group doing the scourging in those same passages ("the Gentiles," 3 Ne. 20:27). Another name for the Gentiles who are doing the scourging at this time is "the Assyrian(s)" or, as described in D&C 101:54, "the destroyer." The Assyrian(s) or destroyer or scourge rise in conjunction with, or because of, the sickness that sweeps the land (D&C 45:31).

These events transpire surrounding the building of New Jerusalem, and thus take place primarily in America (*TPJS,* pp. 17–18). The Assyrian is simply the leader of the group that is doing the scourging. This group we know is an unelected group (Isaiah 10:8, 2 Ne. 20:8), and thus are Gadianton robbers. We also learn in Isaiah Chapter 10 that this group are princes (Isaiah 10:8) whose hands "found the kingdoms of the idols" (Isaiah 10:10). We also learn in Isaiah 14 that the battle of ideas that will be taking place here will be the Assyrian(s) saying we shouldn't lose a single person/a single death is unacceptable; whereas the rest of America says freedom/some people will die (this mirrors the war in heaven) (Isaiah Chapter 14). If the Assyrian(s) rise to power because of the sickness, it begs to reason that "the thing they are promising to protect people from" is the sickness.

## 7. Joseph Smith to Return

Joseph Smith will be resurrected (3 Ne. 21:10) and will return. The "ensign" (D&C 113:5–6, Isaiah 5:26, Isaiah 11:10), the "root of Jesse" (Isaiah 11:10), "my servant" (3 Ne. 20–25), "one mighty and strong" (D&C 85:7), one like Moses (D&C 103:16) are all references to Joseph Smith.

Joseph Smith was promised certain things, among them being the successful implementation of Celestial law, the translation of the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon, the building of New Jerusalem, and the calling home of the ten tribes, etc. (see Joseph Smith's patriarchal blessings)—none of which Joseph Smith did in life, and all of which need to happen as the next steps. Therefore, Joseph must return at this time. However, the Lord repeatedly said that this servant would be instructed of the Lord at this time and will work "prudently" (Isaiah 42:1–4, Isaiah 52:13, 3 Ne. 20:43), or in modern vernacular, in discretion (Isaiah 28:26). Brigham Young also taught that the general membership of the church might not be privy to Joseph Smith's return and actions for some time (Brigham Young, October 3, 1852, *Millennial Star,* 16:594 and *Deseret News,* May 11, 1854).

## 8. Stand in Holy Places (A test, a Test, a TEST!)

"…The time is coming when we will be mixed up in these now peaceful valleys to that extent that it will be difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God. Then, brethren, look out for the great sieve, for there will be a great sifting time, and many will fall; for I say unto you there is a test, a Test, a TEST coming, and who will be able to stand?" (Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball,* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1945, p. 446) We know that when this prophesied test takes place, the Assyrian(s)/scourge/destroyer/etc. is already around and busy. We learn what the test is in a multitude of parables and teachings (e.g., the Parable of the Ten Virgins, the Parable of the Pearl, the Parable of the Treasure in the Field, etc.). This test "will try the integrity of the best of Saints," and Joseph Smith will be watching as the test is being implemented (3 Ne. 24, 25). The Lord in scripture refers to this as "standing in Holy places and being not moved" (e.g. D&C 45:32).

## 9. Rending the Veil of Unbelief (Power of the Lamb)

The Lord taught us Himself that rending the veil of unbelief is a part of, if not entirely so, the test (3 Ne. 26:8–11). Rending the veil of unbelief is a process of having faith as the brother of Jared. We learn what that faith is with the story of the brother of Jared (Ether 4) and in Joseph Smith's Lectures on Faith.

Another prerequisite for rending the veil of unbelief (also tied to faith) is that of having a perfect willingness to live Celestial law. President Lorenzo Snow taught us that at the very least, Saints would have to have a perfect willingness to live Celestial law before the redemption of Zion would take place (JD 18:375). Celestial law has to be reinstated. Zion can't be built by those not living celestial law (D&C 105:1–6). Celestial law contains the law of consecration (D&C 42:2, 18–69; 78:1–32), the law of Celestial marriage (D&C 132), etc. The fullness of the law of consecration as pertaining to Zion will not be reinstated until after the redemption of Zion (D&C 105:34); however, the law of Celestial Marriage could be reinstated pre-redemption of Zion, as "the first shall be last and the last first" (Matthew 19:30, 20:16). I.e., the first principles we failed/lost could be the last brought back, and the last principles we failed/lost could be the first brought back.

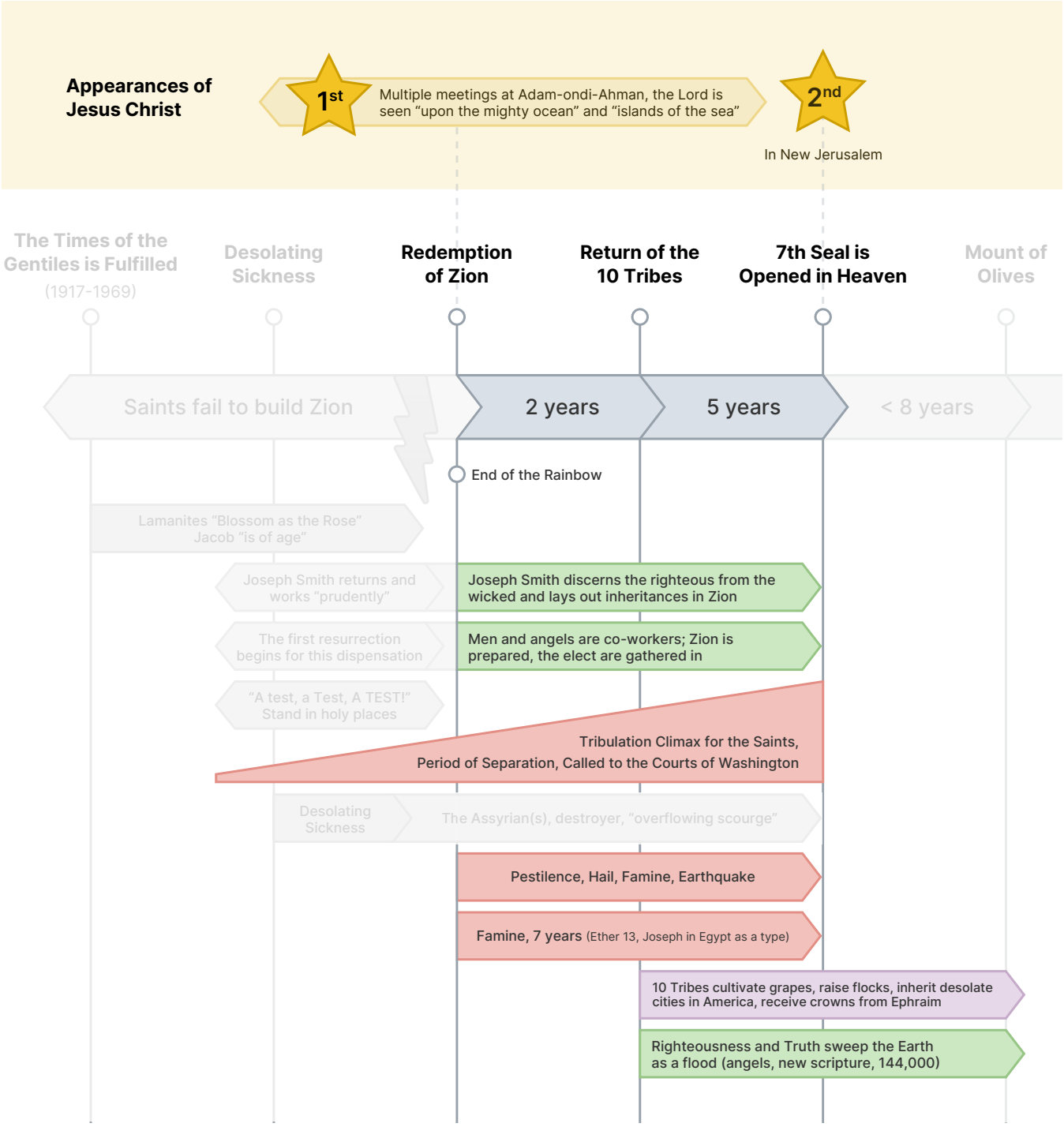
Rending the veil of unbelief provides the point of reference for the revealing of the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon translated by Joseph Smith (2 Nephi 27, Ether 4) to take place. When the Saints have rent the veil of unbelief and sanctified themselves sufficiently, the Power of the Lamb will descend (1 Nephi 14), which is tied to having one's calling and election made sure.

## 10. The Redemption of Zion

Jesus Christ personally shows up "in the mountains" as Joseph Smith taught. "This people will go into the Rocky Mountains; they will there build temples to the Most High. They will raise up a posterity there, and the Latter-day Saints who dwell in [those] mountains will stand in the flesh until the coming of the Son of Man. The Son of Man will come to them while in the Rocky Mountains" (Wilford Woodruff, Conference Report, April 1898, p. 57).

We learn of the nature of this meeting in the Parable of the Nobleman and the Olive Trees found in Doctrine and Covenants 101. The Lord then sends Joseph Smith, who will "gather… the strength of [the Lord's] house," the young and middle-aged men, who will march back and redeem Zion "overshadowed by day in the form of a cloud and a pillar of flaming fire by night, the Lord's voice being uttered forth before his army" (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual,* pp. 249–250; JD 15:364).

# Part III: The Redemption of Zion—Christ's Appearance in New Jerusalem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Tribulation Climax for the Saints,
Period of Separation, Called to the Courts of Washington
Desolating Sickness
The Assyrian(s), destroyer, "overflowing scourge"
Pestilence, Hail, Famine, Earthquake
Famine, 7 years (Ether 13, Joseph in Egypt as a type)
10 Tribes cultivate grapes, raise flocks, inherit desolate cities in America, receive crowns from Ephraim
Righteousness and Truth sweep the Earth as a flood (angels, new scripture, 144,000)

## 1. Called to Washington

Before the Lord destroys a people, there is always a prophet called to give a final warning (2 Ne. 25:9)—this is it for America. Some examples from the scripture include Isaiah going to the king of Israel (Isaiah 1–14), Abinadi to King Noah (Mosiah 11–17), Moses to Pharaoh (Exodus 5), etc.

This event, called to Washington, is Joseph Smith and/or the apostles going to the leaders of the United States of America (Brigham Young, recorded in a letter from Amanda H. Wilcox to Susie Young Gates, March, 11, 1904; Historical Dept. of the Church). Joseph Smith tells the leaders of the USA that they should not trust in the arm of flesh, but rather in the child that is shortly to be born, which is New Jerusalem (Isaiah 7, 2 Ne. 17, 3 Ne. 24 and 25). The prophet's warning to the president of the United States also contains a warning in which he says that once "the child" (New Jerusalem) is born, not 3.5 years will pass before modern alliances are broken, scattered and their wealth taken (Isaiah 8, 2 Ne. 18). We know from 3 Nephi 21 that Joseph will be "healed" (resurrected) and will then "shut the mouths of kings." This is one and the same series of events (vv. 8–10). It is also recorded in 3 Nephi 24 and 25, with Joseph as the same prophetic messenger. We know this won't happen until the open return of Joseph Smith, and that doesn't occur until the redemption of Zion (Parable of the Nobleman and the Olive Trees in D&C 101).

## 2. A Day of Blood (Ephraim's Period of Separation)

The carcasses being torn in half (Isaiah 5:25), the wheat and the tares (D&C 86:1–7), the parable of the 10 virgins (Matthew 25:1–13), etc. all refer to this same time period in which the church will be purged as members say "we have enough," and that which they already have will be taken from them (2 Ne. 28:29–30).

"Whenever the Lord prepares for Zion, there must be a division among the people" (Hugh Nibley, Chapter 2, *Approaching Zion*; JD 9:144). Imagine, "How would my life be different if my knowledge gained from the Book of Mormon were suddenly taken away?" (President Nelson, "Closing Remarks," Oct 2019). "The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do (see Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7)" (President Nelson, "The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior's Second Coming," *Ensign,* April 2020).

We learn from Isaiah that this separation occurs primarily due to people unable or unwilling to accept new knowledge: "the whole staff of bread, the whole stay of water" (Isaiah 3:1; 2 Ne. 13:1; Chapter 10, *Book of Mormon Student Manual*). The implementation of Celestial law, the new doctrine being revealed, and the Saints' pride in being unable or unwilling to accept them will be the primary causes of peoples' apostasy. The Lord describes this division as being between those who stand in holy places and will not be moved vs. those who lift up their voices, curse God and die (D&C 45:32). Those that stand in holy places are those who follow the counsel of the keys (D&C 1:14), and those who follow the counsel of the keys will be the wheat who are gathered into the garners (D&C 105:36–37). This period overlaps "a test, a Test, a TEST," with the test ending with the open return of Joseph Smith. This period continues and progressively becomes more intense.

## 3. Adam-ondi-Ahman

This is the first "coming," or first star mentioned in part one, which cannot occur until after the redemption of Zion, for Joseph Smith does not openly return until the redemption of Zion (D&C 101:55–62), and Joseph Smith is openly present at Adam-ondi-Ahman (*TPJS,* pp. 364–365).

The first of many meetings at this location takes place and will continue to take place as the city of the New Jerusalem is constructed (Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Progress of Man,* 481–82).

The law of consecration as pertaining to the New Jerusalem will also roll forward at this time (D&C 105:34).

This will be the beginning of the second time the Lord redeems Israel (Isaiah 11:11), also known as "hunters of men" (Jeremiah 16:16). The Lord first sent for fishers (the missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints); in this day he will send forth hunters (the 144,000 of the Church of the Firstborn, now in its infancy). Their job is to bring as many as they can into the Church of the Firstborn (Orson Pratt, JD 16:312).

The first meetings that take place will be primarily selective priesthood holders (*The Millennial Messiah,* pp. 578–579). This is not the same thing as the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. There are multiple events that take place in this area.

## 4. End of the Rainbow

"I have asked of the Lord concerning His coming; and while asking the Lord, He gave a sign and said, 'In the days of Noah I set a bow in the heavens as a sign and token that in any year that the bow should be seen the Lord would not come; but there should be seed time and harvest during that year; but whenever you see the bow withdrawn, it shall be a token that there shall be famine, pestilence, and great distress among the nations, and that the coming of the Messiah is not far distant'" (*TPJS,* pp. 340–41).

Considering what comes next, and the similarity of the language, we know that the "bow in the heavens," i.e., "the rainbow," will stop being seen before the famine and before the coming of the Messiah. This is not a sign that says, "in one year the Messiah will come"; this is a sign that says, "within one year there shall be famine, pestilence and great distress among the nations, and the coming of the Messiah is not far distant."

## 5. Pestilence, Hail, Famine, & Earthquake

"…the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country" (*TPJS,* p. 17).

These events are what are described by John after he sees the 6th seal being broken in heaven (Revelation 6:12–17). These same events are discussed in D&C 88:87–97, in which the Lord said in the early 1800s, "for not many days hence…" meaning these events hadn't taken place pre-1800s. The same series of events are discussed in 3 Nephi chapters 20 and 21, Moses 7:60–66, JS–M, and *TPJS* p. 287. Joseph Smith also identified these events as being future from his time (*TPJS,* p. 287).

President Nelson recently warned that these events are still yet future: "Physical and spiritual tempests are a part of life on the earth, as the COVID-19 pandemic has reminded us. Of the time prior to His Second Coming, the Savior predicted days of great tribulation. He said, 'There shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places' (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:29)" ("Grow Into the Principle of Revelation," *Liahona,* January 2021).

## 6. 7–Year Famine (Tribulations) Start

We learn about the details surrounding the famine from Joseph in Egypt as a type (Ether 13:6–8). It is mentioned in point 5 above, but is important enough that it also gets its own point here. Is this "tribulation" or is this "famine"? Frankly, I think the word game is moot, as a

"tribulation" might not have a "famine," but a "famine" always causes "tribulation"; so to say "there will be a famine" means "there will be tribulation."

Will this "tribulation" be different than the "tribulation of Judah"? You better believe it. Will these two tribulations have many things in common? You better believe it. Remember, "the first shall be last and the last shall be first" (Matthew 19:30, 20:16)—this is what we call a chiasmus or the mirror principle. Preparing for this famine is what separates the five foolish virgins vs. the five wise (Matthew 24:31–51; 25:1–13).

## 7. Return of the 10 Tribes

At this time, Joseph Smith calls the 10 tribes home; they are revealed and return as a body.

We learn from the story of Joseph being sold into Egypt being "a type" of how things will play out directly before the redemption of Zion, as well as the building of the New Jerusalem, that Joseph's brothers (10 tribes) will return 2 years (Genesis 45:6) into the 7 years of "famine/tribulation" (Ether 13). When they get to Zion, the journey will have been so miraculous "that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north" (Jeremiah 16:14–15). Then will be sung the song "sing thou barren" (3 Ne. 22:1).

How long will they remain in Zion? Elder Orson Pratt answered the same question: "How long will they who come from the north countries tarry in the heights of Zion? Sometime. They have got to raise wheat, cultivate the grape, wine and oil, raise flocks and herds, and their souls will have to become as a watered garden" (JD 18:25). They will remain there until the events at the Mount of Olives, at which point they will return to Palestine (Orson Pratt, JD 18:68).

The remaining 144,000 will be chosen ("elected") from the returned ten tribes—12,000 from each of the tribes are chosen, sealed in their foreheads, set apart, and sent out to gather (Revelation 7). They will be purified as silver in that Holy City, in one of its Holy Temples (3 Ne. 24:1–7).

## 8. Truth and Righteousness Sweep the Earth as a Flood

Joseph Smith taught us that in the Parable of the Mustard Seed the fowls lodging in the branches were the angels of God (*TPJS,* p. 98). Joseph continued teaching us that the angels doing the lodging would be our ancestors (*TPJS,* p. 159). On another occasion, Joseph Smith said that when this work takes place, when truth and righteousness sweep the earth, that "angels and men are to be co-workers" (*TPJS,* pp. 159, 84). These are the 144,000.

Angels will continue to free-flow intelligence to those living in New Jerusalem, giving direction on how the city is to be built and what is to be done ("Section 133, The Lord's Appendix to the Doctrine and Covenants," *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (2002), 335–43). Also, in connection with this truth sweeping the earth as a flood (Moses 7:61–62), we have the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon, which, by this point in time, will have been brought forth (2 Ne. 27, Ether 4). We will also have the scriptures of the returned ten tribes (Talmage, Conference Report, Oct. 1916, p. 76). Knowledge from this point on will begin to trickle forth as from a dam that has sprung leaks. It is a gradual process until the dam is finally broken and the world is flooded with knowledge (D&C 121:26–33; 128:18–19).

Another important series of events that will transpire regarding revealing of truth is discussed in detail in Alma 37: Joseph Smith will bring forth or reveal the works of darkness of the world.

## 9. Tribulation Climaxes for the Saints

This is also referred to as the "yoke" or "burden" of the Assyrian (Isaiah 10:27), or the wrath of the dragon (JST, Revelation 12:13–17). As the New Jerusalem is being built, the Assyrian's influence and power will get "even to the neck" (Isaiah 8:8); it will almost surround the city. John the Revelator sees that when the dragon can't get the child (New Jerusalem), the dragon is "wroth" and goes after soft targets, those he can get—members of the church worldwide who, for whatever reason, are not in New Jerusalem (JST, Revelation 12:13–17).

Those who will not flee must take up the sword to fight against their neighbor (D&C 45:68). There will be many evil alliances made at this time, and many anti-Christs (necromancers) will arise and perform great miracles in direct opposition to truth (Isaiah 8:19; *Old Testament Student Manual,* p. 146; JS–M 21–25).

## 10. New Jerusalem

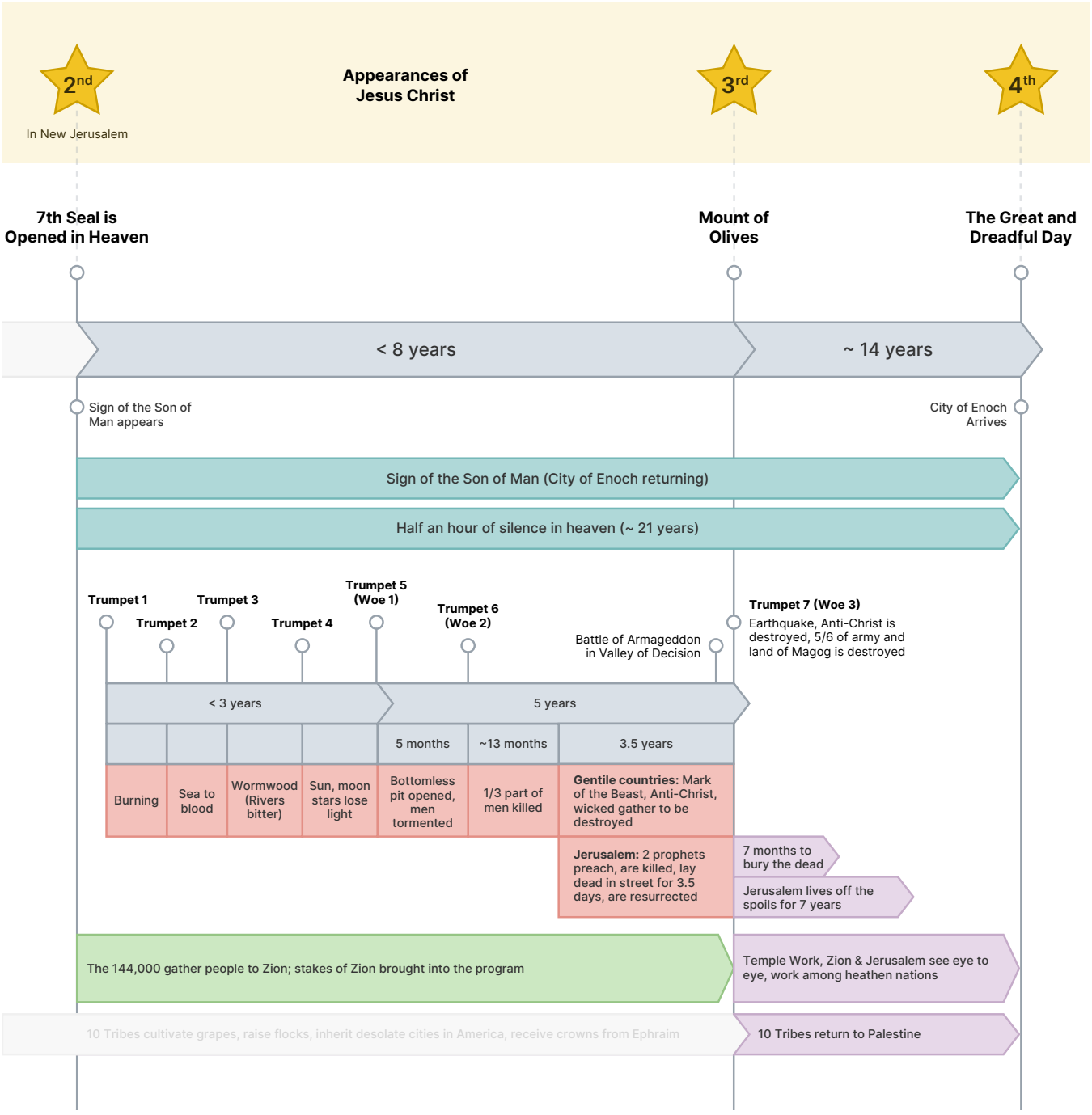
The 144,000 and an innumerable host (Revelation 7), putting the "cap stone on" (Joseph Smith, History, 1838–1856, volume E-1 [1 July 1843–30 April 1844]), Jesus "suddenly come[s] to his temple" (3 Ne. 24:1), etc. are all tied to the same event: the Anointing in New Jerusalem.

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Daniel 7:13–14).

President Spencer W. Kimball taught, "when Satan is bound in a single home—when Satan is bound in a single life—the Millennium has already begun in that home, in that life" (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball,* ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], p. 172). With this definition of "the Millennium," the Millennium begins for the Saints of God at the time of the Anointing, for Jesus will be dwelling in the midst of New Jerusalem, and Satan will be bound there. Using the same definition, the "Millennium" for the Jews will start after the Mount of Olives, and the "Millennium" for the world will start at the Great and Dreadful Day.

That being said, however, the events at the Mount of Olives or the Great and Dreadful Day officially begin the "1,000 years," for we know the Lord could have appeared in the New Jerusalem during any generation righteous enough to redeem and build the New Jerusalem (D&C 105:1–2), whereas the events at the Mount of Olives and the Great and Dreadful Day are fixed.

# Part IV: Christ's Appearance in New Jerusalem—The Great and Dreadful Day


2nd
In New Jerusalem
Appearances of Jesus Christ
3rd
4th
7th Seal is Opened in Heaven
Mount of Olives
The Great and Dreadful Day
< 8 years
~ 14 years
Sign of the Son of Man appears
City of Enoch Arrives
Sign of the Son of Man (City of Enoch returning)
Half an hour of silence in heaven (~ 21 years)
Trumpet 1
Trumpet 2
Trumpet 3
Trumpet 4
Trumpet 5 (Woe 1)
Trumpet 6 (Woe 2)
Battle of Armageddon in Valley of Decision
Trumpet 7 (Woe 3)
Earthquake, Anti-Christ is destroyed, 5/6 of army and land of Magog is destroyed
< 3 years
5 years
5 months
~13 months
3.5 years
Burning
Sea to blood
Wormwood (Rivers bitter)
Sun, moon stars lose light
Bottomless pit opened, men tormented
1/3 part of men killed
Gentile countries: Mark of the Beast, Anti-Christ, wicked gather to be destroyed
Jerusalem: 2 prophets preach, are killed, lay dead in street for 3.5 days, are resurrected
7 months to bury the dead
Jerusalem lives off the spoils for 7 years
The 144,000 gather people to Zion; stakes of Zion brought into the program
Temple Work, Zion & Jerusalem see eye to eye, work among heathen nations
10 Tribes cultivate grapes, raise flocks, inherit desolate cities in America, receive crowns from Ephraim
10 Tribes return to Palestine

## 1. Sign of the Son of Man

The 7th seal is opened in heaven (Revelation 8:1) around the same time that the sign of the Son of Man appears (D&C 88:91–95).

It was documented that Joseph Smith said that the sign of the Son of Man is the city of Enoch returning, that it will resemble a planet or a comet, and that only the righteous will understand it's significance (*The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet,* p. 181).

This sign is a countdown to the Great and Dreadful Day. We know this because the City of Enoch returns (gets to Earth) "at the end of the world" (JST, Genesis 14:34; Moses 7:61–66), and we know that "the end of the world" means, or is synonymous with, "the destruction of the wicked, which is the end of the world" (JS–Matthew 1:4). "The destruction of the wicked" is a reference to the Great and Dreadful Day ("Chapter 36: The Lord's Second Coming," *Doctrines of the Gospel Student Manual*). Moroni further clarified to Joseph Smith that those who come with the Savior at the Great and Dreadful Day will be those who burn the wicked (JS–H 1:37).

The time of this countdown—the space between first seeing the sign of the Son of Man in the sky and it's actual arrival to Earth ("silence in heaven for about half an hour")—is most often calculated with 1 day = 1000 years (2 Peter 3:8). This calculation works out to be 20.8 years or ~21 years.

## 2. Day of the Jews, 144,000

At this day, the gospel will be primarily preached to the Jews and Israel. Before this day, the 144,000 were being selected, called, ordained and purified in the temple, and were helping gather people in and unto the New Jerusalem (3 Ne. 21:23–29, 3 Ne. 24:1–3, Revelation 7, Moses 7:61–62). As Elder Orson Pratt taught, they (the 144,000) would need to be purified in the temple in the New Jerusalem so that when they went out in the days of vengeance, they would not be overcome by plague, pestilence, etc. (JD 15:365–66). This is the day that the 144,000 will go off and perform this missionary work as the days of vengeance are poured out. This obviously includes missionary work to Old Jerusalem.

## 3. Trumpets 1–4

The days of vengeance begin with the blowing of these four trumpets (Revelation 8:7–12).

Many Christians lump these four together, as these four judgments appear to be one large event, and the scriptures do not provide time periods for them (e.g. The Wormwood Prophecy, Thomas Horn). Elder Orson Pratt did say, "the sounding of the trumpets does not take place, as many have supposed, in rapid succession, but certain events have to be accomplished between their respective soundings" (JD, 16:43). These events will take place literally, and the horn(s) will be heard (Orson Pratt, JD 16:45, 18:28), but that does not mean that the space between the successive blowing of the first four trumpets is as short as days, weeks or months, for we know that Woe #1 lasts 5 months (Revelation 9:5). These four blasts include burning, Wormwood, etc.

There are those who have speculated that this event could all be related to a single meteor (for example), with the first horn being break-off debris burning up cities, the second being the break-off hitting the sea and causing the sea to turn to blood, the third trump being the actual meteor named Wormwood hitting the earth, and the fourth trumpet being the third part of the sun being smitten either by now dust debris in the atmosphere or by the earth spinning faster than it did previously, etc.

It is very likely that whatever you speculate the cause of these four trumpets to be, they are all related, and are in fact a single larger event. This is made clear by the separating of the first four trumpets as a group and the last three trumpets as "the three woes."

## 4. Woe #1

The bottomless pit is opened for the last three woes (Revelation 9:1–10). This is when the anti-Christ is first mentioned (Revelation 9:11). Those that mention the anti-Christ before all the events listed before woe #1 are confused with the points of reference. This is also the first event that a specific time is given—5 months—in which battle-readiness is reduced, i.e., men are tormented.

## 5. Woe #2

The next woe is broken into two parts, but is a single trumpet. The anti-Christ and his army are loosed and kill a third part of men in one year + one month + one day + one hour (Revelation 9:14–21), and this is when the "mark of the beast" is introduced (Revelation 13). After that event, the focus changes to Old Jerusalem. This is where the two prophets hold off the armies of Gog of Magog for three and a half years, we have the battle in the Valley of Decision (i.e. the Battle of Armageddon), the two prophets being slain, and the city of Jerusalem being ravished (Revelation 11; "Enrichment I: The Battle of Armageddon: A Prophetic View," *Old Testament Student Manual 1 Kings–Malachi,* pp. 291–295).

## 6. Mount of Olives

This is Woe #3—Christ appears at the Mount of Olives. The two prophets are resurrected, the Jews flee into the newly formed valley where they meet the Savior, the earthquake takes place, the anti-Christ is destroyed, and the lands of Magog are likewise destroyed (Revelation 14:14–20; "Enrichment I: The Battle of Armageddon: A Prophetic View," *Old Testament Student Manual 1 Kings–Malachi,* pp. 291–295).

## 7. Jerusalem is Rebuilt, Ten Tribes Return to Palestine

The scriptures say that it will take seven months to bury the dead, and people will be able to live off the spoils for seven years (Ezekiel 39:8–16). This means that the Great and Dreadful Day will not occur for at least seven years after the events at the Mount of Olives.

Joseph Smith taught, "Jerusalem must be rebuilt, and the temple and water come out from under the temple, and the waters of the Dead Sea be healed. It will take some time to rebuild the walls of the city and the temple, etc; and all this must be done before the Son of Man will make His appearance" (*TPJS,* p. 286).

The ten tribes will begin to receive their permanent inheritances at this time (Orson Pratt, JD 18:68).

## 8. Uniting of the Two World Capitals

Jerusalem becomes the second world capital of the Lord's kingdom, with the law going forth from Mount Zion and the word from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:3, Micah 4:2, *TPJS,* p. 252). At this day, "The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim" (Isaiah 11:13).

## 9. Missionary Work Among Heathen Nations

The Gentiles had their day of choosing the Lord or being destroyed temporally and spiritually (1 Ne. 14:7), then the Jews had their time to like-

wise choose the Lord or be destroyed (Day of the Jews/144,000). This is the day of the heathen nations, i.e., the nations without an Abrahamic background (D&C 45:54). Joseph Smith taught, "The heathen nations who will not come up to worship will be visited with the judgments of God, and must eventually be destroyed from the earth" (*TPJS,* p. 268).

## 10. The Great and Dreadful Day

We know that the Great and Dreadful Day is at least 7 years post-Mount of Olives events (Ezekiel 39:8–16), and it is also most often speculated that the "silence in heaven" is 21 years (2 Peter 3:8). This jibes well because we know that the Lord breaks last days events into periods of seven ("Daniel 9:24–27," *Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi*). We also know that from the opening of the 7th seal to the events at the Mount of Olives (woe #3), it will be at least 60 months or 5 years (woe #1 =5 months, woe #2=55 months). With dualism, we can speculate also that the time period from the opening of the 7th seal to the battle in the Valley of Decision is not greater than 8 years (2 Ne. 17:16–24, Isaiah 7:16). Taking the above information, it is more than likely that there will be seven years to the Mount of Olives from the opening of the 7th seal, and fourteen years to the Great and Dreadful Day from the Mount of Olives (completing the half an hour of silence and keeping things in multiples of seven).

At this event, the Lord appears in glory to all mankind (see D&C 45:44; 101:23; Matthew 24:30; Isaiah 40:5; JST Revelation 1:7). The *Doctrines of the Gospel Student Manual,* Chapter 36, explains what happens at the Great and Dreadful Day: "the veil will be removed from the earth when the Savior appears (see D&C 88:95; 38:8; 101:23)," and "faithful Saints, both living and dead, will be caught up to meet Christ at His coming (see D&C 88:96–98; 45:45; 76:63; 1 Thess. 4:16–17)."

The City of Enoch also makes its appearance at this time, and the reunion of those from the earth and those of the City of Enoch then takes place (Moses 7:63–64). Everything of a telestial order or lower will be destroyed (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation,* 1:86–87), and the earth will be partially rolled back to the presence of God (*TPJS,* p. 181).

# SECTION I

# Sense of Urgency

*"My dear young brothers and sisters, these surely are the latter days, and the Lord is hastening his work..."*

*"Things are going to move forward at an accelerated pace. The Church is going to have an unprecedented future, unparalleled."*

*"'We are just building up to the climax of this last dispensation—when the Savior's Second Coming becomes a reality."*

*"You are the children whom God chose to be part of His battalion during this great climax... this world's tumultuous winding-up scenes."*

*"I am optimistic about the future. ... But I am also not naive about the days ahead."*

*"The time to act is now. This is a hinge point in the history of the Church, and your part is vital."*

*"As I have stated before, the gathering of Israel is the most important work taking place on earth today. One crucial element of this gathering is preparing a people who are able, ready, and worthy to receive the Lord when He comes again... a people who rejoice in their agency to live the higher, holier laws of Jesus Christ. I call upon you, my dear brothers and sisters, to become this righteous people."*

*"Think Celestial!"*

*"I... bless you with the ability to leave the world behind as you assist in this crucial and urgent work."*

*"Time is running out."*

*—President Russell M. Nelson (2018–2023)*

# The Times of the Gentiles

Let me pose a hypothetical situation and question to you mothers who have daughters: your daughter comes up to you, and she has three boys she is interested in. She just doesn't know who the right one is. You, as a mother, don't like any of these three choices, and you don't think any of these three is the right choice. Do you say to your daughter a) "daughter, those with the spirit will know the right one," or b) "daughter, those with the spirit will know the right one ***when*** he comes along." Sherlock Holmes solved a mystery due to a dog not barking when he realized that the dog barked at everyone except for those he was familiar with, and there was no reported barking on the night of the incident. It wasn't evidence, but rather the lack of evidence that made things clear.

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** asked the question,

> Does anyone know when the Lord will come [to New Jerusalem]?
>
> (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 1:665–66)

Now remember, the Saints will know the day and the hour of the Mount and Olives, as well as the Great and Dreadful Day; ergo, this quote from Elder McConkie must be talking about New Jerusalem, as it will be the only event that will sneak up on the Saints.

After asking the question, **Elder McConkie** answered it:

> As to the day and hour, No; as to the generation, Yes. The Saints, the children of light, those who can read the signs of the times, those who treasure up the Lord's word so they will not be deceived, will know the generation.
>
> (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 1:665–66)

Elder McConkie, when he said this, obviously thought the generation could already be identified, which will become more and more apparent as I continue.

The Prophet **Joseph Smith** said,

> There are those of the rising generation who shall not taste death till Christ comes.
>
> (General Conference, April 6, 1843)

**Elder McConkie** explained who would constitute the "rising generation":

> The rising generation is the one that has just begun. Thus, technically, children born on April 6, 1843, would be the first members of [that] rising generation, and all children born, however many years later, to the same parents would still be members of that same rising generation. It is not unreasonable to suppose that many young men had babies at the time of this prophecy and also had other children as much as 50 or 75 years later, assuming for instance that they were married again to younger women. This very probable assumption would bring the date up to, say, the 2nd decade in the 20th century — and the children so born would be members of that same rising generation of which the Prophet spoke. Now if these children lived to the normal age of men generally they would be alive well past the year 2000 A.D.
>
> (*Mormon Doctrine,* pp. 692–693)

So that rising generation would have entailed people born as late as 1920.

What should you have noticed about these three quotes? They all had to do with *the generation.* Joseph Smith said that some of the rising generation would be part of it, not all, and not even most. *Some.* McConkie clarified that those born as late as 1920 would still constitute this generation. That would mean that at least some born between 1915–1920 would live to see the Lord's second coming to New Jerusalem.

This is also supported by this prophecy given by **James E. Talmage,**

> The ten tribes shall come; they are not lost unto the Lord; they shall be brought forth as hath been predicted; ***and I say unto you there are those now living—aye, some here present—who shall live to read the records of the Lost Tribes of Israel,*** which shall be made one with the record of the Jews, or the Holy Bible, and the record of the Nephites, or the Book of Mormon, even as the Lord hath predicted.
>
> (In Conference Report, Oct. 1916, p. 76; emphasis added)

James E. Talmage was not so much prophesying, but bearing his testimony of Joseph Smith's prophecy. Once again, "some" born between 1915–1920 will live to see New Jerusalem.

We also have the quote from **Wilford Woodruff,** who said in ***1873***,

> But one thing is certain, though the Lord has not revealed the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man shall come, he has pointed out the generation, and the signs predicted as the forerunners of that great event have ***begun*** to appear in the heavens and on the earth, and they will continue until all is consummated.
>
> (*Deseret News: Semi-Weekly,* February 4, 1873, 2; referenced in "Chapter 24: Preparing for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ," *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff,* p. 253)

Wilford Woodruff says that the signs to point out the generation, the major signs, had already *begun* to move forward, once again confirming the timeline (post 1873, pre Elder McConkie's quote). Remember the story of the mother and Sherlock Holmes I gave at the start—President Woodruff here, like the mother in the story, is saying "when" (i.e. "forerunners have begun"), while Elder McConkie did not.

Now we need to answer, "what is this generation"? What is "this generation" that we are trying to identify? Yes, it is the generation that will live to see Christ's return in New Jerusalem, but how do we know that? We know that because of Christ's prophecy regarding the generation in which the times of the gentiles are fulfilled. Thus, we need to have an understanding of the times of the gentiles and when they were fulfilled.

## The Times of the Gentiles Begin

**The Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual** for Section 45 explains,

> **President Joseph Fielding Smith** explained that "the times of the Gentiles commenced shortly after the death of our Redeemer. The Jews soon rejected the Gospel and it was then taken to the Gentiles. The times of the Gentiles have continued from that time until now. The Lord said: 'But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.' In that day the Gospel was given first to the Jews and then taken to the Gentiles. In this dispensation it was taken first to the Gentiles and afterwards it will go to the Jews." (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 1:196.)
>
> The times of the Gentiles began with Peter's vision and the baptism of Cornelius (see Acts 10).
>
> ("Section 45, 'Looking Forth for the Great Day of the Lord,'" *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), pp. 93–94)

## The Fulness of the Times of the Gentiles

Moroni, when visiting Joseph Smith as a young man, said, "the fulness of the Gentiles was soon to come in" (JS–H 1:41). In 1830, the Lord said, "I have sent forth the fulness of my gospel by the hand of my servant Joseph" (D&C 35:17). We know that Joseph ushered in the fulness of the gospel, and thus what Moroni had told Joseph had come to fruition; the fulness of the times of the Gentiles was come in, or as Elijah declared, "the time has fully come" (D&C 110:14). The fulness of the gospel included celestial law, which contains in it the laws of consecration and celestial marriage.

## The Times of the Gentiles is Fulfilled

In **Doctrine and Covenants 45** we read,

> **28** And when the times of the Gentiles is come in, a light shall break forth among them that sit in darkness, and it shall be the fulness of my gospel;
>
> **29** But they receive it not; for they perceive not the light, and they turn their hearts from me because of the precepts of men.
>
> **30** ***And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.***

**3 Nephi 16**

> **10** And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you: At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; and if they shall do all those things, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them.
>
> **11** And then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel,...

In these verses, we learn that the fulness of the Gentiles is to come in, and the fulness of the Gentiles is synonymous with the fulness of the Lord's gospel (D&C 35:17). However, the people rejected celestial law. They turned their hearts from it and began to be infiltrated by the precepts of men, and in that generation's lifetime, the times of the Gentiles was to be fulfilled.

**Doctrine and Covenants 105**

> **2** Behold, I say unto you, were it not for the transgressions of my people, speaking concerning the church and not individuals, they might have been redeemed even now.
>
> **3** But behold, they have not learned to be obedient to the things which I required at their hands, but are full of all manner of evil, and do not impart of their substance, as becometh saints, to the poor and afflicted among them;
>
> **4** And are not united according to the union required by the ***law of the celestial kingdom;***
>
> **5** ***And Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom;*** otherwise I cannot receive her unto myself.

**Doctrine and Covenants 132**

> **1** Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as you have inquired of my hand to know and understand wherein I, the Lord, justified my servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as also Moses, David and Solomon, my servants, as touching the principle and doctrine of their ***having many wives and concubines***—
>
> **2** Behold, and lo, I am the Lord thy God, and will answer thee as touching ***this matter.***
>
> **3** Therefore, prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you; for all those who have ***this law*** revealed unto them must obey the same.
>
> **4** For behold, I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory.
>
> **5** For all who will have a blessing at my hands shall abide ***the law*** which was appointed for that blessing, and the conditions thereof, as were instituted from before the foundation of the world.
>
> **6** And as pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant, it was instituted for the ***fulness of my glory; and he that receiveth a fulness thereof must and shall abide the law,*** or he shall be damned, saith the Lord God.

**Lorenzo Snow**

> ***The principles of Plural Marriage were revealed for the benefit and exaltation of the children of men,*** but how much unhappiness has arisen through failure, on the part of some who have contracted this order of marriage, to conform to the laws that govern it! But does it arise through any defect in the order of the marriage system? O no; but from ignorance and the folly and wickedness of those individuals who enter into it, who abuse, rather than righteously obey, it. ***So in regard to the principles of the United Order.*** Its principles too are sacred, and I assure you we will never go back to Jackson County, Missouri, there to build up the new Jerusalem of the latter days, ***until there is a perfect willingness on our part to conform to its rules and principles.***
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 18, Discourse 48, p. 375, April 5, 1877)

**Church History Topics: United Orders**

> By the 1890s, both the cooperative institutions and United Orders had either closed or transitioned into private business entities.
>
> (Church History Topics, https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/topics/united-orders)

**Official Declaration 1: Excerpts from Three Address from President Wilford Woodruff**

> The question is this: Which is the wisest course for the Latter-day Saints to pursue—to continue to attempt to practice plural marriage, with the laws of the nation against it and the opposition of sixty millions of people, and at the cost of the confiscation and loss of all the Temples, and the stopping of all the ordinances therein, both for the living and the dead, and the imprisonment of the First Presidency and Twelve and the heads of families in the Church, and the confiscation of personal property of the people (all of which of themselves would stop the practice); or, after doing and suffering what we have through our adherence to this principle to cease the practice and submit to the law, and through doing so leave the Prophets, Apostles and fathers at home, so that they can instruct the people and attend to the duties of the Church, and also leave the Temples in the hands of the Saints, so that they can attend to the ordinances of the Gospel, both for the living and the dead?
>
> The Lord showed me by vision and revelation exactly what would take place if we did not stop this practice. If we had not stopped it, you would have had no use for ... any of the men in this temple at Logan; for all ordinances would be stopped throughout the land of Zion. Confusion would reign throughout Israel, and many men would be made prisoners. This trouble would have come upon the whole Church, and we should have been compelled to stop the practice. Now, the question is, whether it should be stopped in this manner, or in the way the Lord has manifested to us, and leave our Prophets and Apostles and fathers free men, and the temples in the hands of the people, so that the dead may be redeemed. A large number has already been delivered from the prison house in the spirit world by this people, and shall the work go on or stop? This is the question I lay before the Latter-day Saints. You have to judge for yourselves. I want you to answer it for yourselves. I shall not

answer it; but I say to you that that is exactly the condition we as a people would have been in had we not taken the course we have.

(Cache Stake Conference, Logan, Utah, Sunday, ***November 1, 1891.*** Reported in *Deseret Weekly,* November 14, 1891)

The fulness of the gospel was available, and President Wilford Woodruff asked the question, and laid it before the Latter-day Saints, and told them to judge for themselves and to answer it for themselves. The result was, or the answer to that question was, ending the United Order and the practice of plural marriage, both in the 1890s.

**Ezra Taft Benson**

God has to work through mortals of varying degrees of spiritual progress. Sometimes he temporarily grants to men their unwise requests in order that they might learn from their own sad experiences. Some refer to this as the "Samuel principle." The children of Israel wanted a king, like all the nations. The prophet Samuel was displeased and prayed to the Lord about it. The Lord responded by saying to Samuel, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." The Lord told Samuel to warn the people of the consequences if they had a king. Samuel gave them the warning, but they still insisted on their king. So God gave them a king and let them suffer. They learned the hard way. God wanted it to be otherwise, but within certain bounds he grants unto men according to their desires. Bad experiences are an expensive school that only fools keep going to (see 1 Samuel 8).

("Jesus Christ—Gifts and Expectations," BYU Speeches, December 10, 1974)

**John Taylor**

My son John, you have asked me concerning the New and Everlasting Covenant how far it is binding upon my people.

Thus saith the Lord: All commandments that I give must be obeyed by those calling themselves by my name unless they are revoked by me or by my authority, and ***how can I revoke an everlasting covenant,*** for I the Lord am everlasting and my everlasting covenants cannot be abrogated nor done away with, but they stand forever.

Have I not given my word in great plainness on this subject? ***Yet have not great numbers of my people been negligent in the observance of my law and the keeping of my commandments,*** and yet have I borne with them these many years; and this because of their weakness—because of the perilous times, and furthermore, ***it is more pleasing to me that men should use their free agency in regard to these matters. Nevertheless, I the Lord do not change and my word and my covenants and my law do not, and as I have heretofore said by my servant Joseph: All those who would enter into my glory must and shall obey my law.*** And have I not commanded men that if they were Abraham's seed and would enter into my glory, they must do the works of Abraham. I have not revoked this law, nor will I, for it is everlasting, and those who will enter into my glory must obey the conditions thereof; even so, Amen.

(President John Taylor's 1886 Revelation, September 27, 1886)

*It was confirmed that this was written by the hand of President John Taylor; however, President Grant in an official statement clarified that it was not a revelation binding on the Church.*

**Isaiah 50**

**1** Yea, for thus saith the Lord, Have I put thee away, or have I cast thee off forever? For thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement? To whom have I put thee away, or to which of my creditors have I sold you? Yea, to whom have I sold you?

**2** Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away; wherefore, when I came there was no man; when I called there was none to answer. O house of Israel, is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver?

**(17–11) Isaiah 50. "Where Is the Bill of Your Mother's Divorcement?**

The Lord employed the figure of a divorce and the sale of a slave to teach that though Israel's past apostasy scattered them among the nations, the ***Lord had not set aside the original covenant He made with His people.*** Chapter 50 continues the theme begun in chapters 48 and 49 that in the last days Israel would be gathered and established again.

Under Mosaic law a man who divorced his wife was required to give her a written bill of divorce. She was then free to marry again (see Deuteronomy 24:1–4). Likewise, under the ancient laws, a man could sell himself or his children into slavery to satisfy his creditors. But the Lord had no creditors; neither had He divorced His "wife," Israel. ***Instead, Israel had separated herself from the Lord*** by her sins and was in debt to her evil creditors. "For your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away" (Isaiah 50:1).

But the Lord has power both to redeem Israel from their creditors and to forgive their transgressions against Him. This He assured them He will do. Speaking of the future as if it were already past, He reminded them that He tried to do so once before when He, Jehovah, came to earth as Jesus Christ. This statement is a messianic passage, since Jesus is both Redeemer from sin and Deliverer from evil ways. Yet when He appeared on earth, there was no man ready to receive Him; when He called upon men to repent, there was none to answer (see v. 2). He gave His "back to the smiters" (He was scourged) and hid not His face "from shame and spitting" (v. 6; compare Matthew 26:67; 27:26). But in spite of such rejection and treatment, He still did not divorce Israel or sell her as a slave. The covenant was still in effect, and Israel would be restored to the status of a free and faithful wife of Jehovah.

("The Gathering of Israel and the Coming of the Messiah (Isaiah 48–54)," *Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), pp. 194–195)

From what we learned in D&C 45, the generation that made that choice and/or witnessed it would live to see the times of the Gentiles fulfilled. This should bring Wilford Woodruff's quote from the introduction into clearer view.

**Wilford Woodruff**

But one thing is certain, though the Lord has not revealed the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man shall come, he has pointed out the generation, and the signs predicted as the fore-runners of that great event have ***begun*** to appear in the heavens and on the earth, and they will continue until all is consummated.

(*Deseret News: Semi-Weekly,* February 4, 1873, 2; referenced in "Chapter 24: Preparing for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ," *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff,* p. 253)

So according to the Lord, those in the 1890s would live to see the times of the Gentiles fulfilled, but how was that generation to know when they had witnessed the time of the Gentiles being fulfilled? Or in other words, what did the Lord mean when He said, "and then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel" (3 Nephi 16:11)?

## Knowing the Times of the Gentiles is Fulfilled

**D&C 45**

**12** [Zion]— a city reserved until a day of righteousness shall come—a day which was sought for by all holy men, and they found it not because of wickedness and abominations;

**13** And confessed they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth;

> **14** But obtained a promise that they should find it and see it in their flesh.
>
> **15** Wherefore, hearken and I will reason with you, and I will speak unto you and prophesy, as unto men in days of old.
>
> **16** And I will show it plainly as I showed it unto my disciples as I stood before them in the flesh, and spake unto them, saying: As ye have asked of me concerning the signs of my coming, in the day when I shall come in my glory in the clouds of heaven, to fulfil the promises that I have made unto your fathers

What is the Lord referring to here? He is referring to the Olivet Discourse that He gave on the Mount of Olives, speaking with His disciples, in the which He said:

**Luke 21 (JST)**

> **20** And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.
>
> **21** Then let them which are in Judæa flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.
>
> **22** For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.
>
> **23** But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.
>
> **24** And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.
>
> ...
>
> **32** Verily I say unto you, this generation, *the generation when the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled,* shall not pass away till all be fulfilled.

**D&C 45**

> **31** And there shall be men standing in that generation, that shall not pass until they shall see an overflowing scourge; [because] a desolating sickness shall cover the land.

It is important to note that the first scripture is from Doctrine and Covenants—the voice of the Lord written by the hand of Joseph Smith. The second scripture from Luke was also translated and verified by Joseph Smith. If this isn't correct, then it makes Jesus a liar or, at the very least, makes Joseph Smith a false prophet. In other words, we can't just brush this off; this is a serious prophecy. Another thing to note is that these passages make it impossible for members to create ambiguity in the Lord's words and/or try to twist them into something He is not saying. The Lord prefaced this saying, "I will show it plainly." So once again, if you try to create ambiguity in His words, you are turning Jesus into a liar by saying what He said isn't what He meant, i.e., He didn't speak clearly and plainly.

So what did the Lord plainly say here?

1. Jerusalem would be trodden down and destroyed by the Gentiles—that's the desolation spoken of by Daniel (JS–Matthew 1:12; Daniel 9:27, 11:31; see TG Abomination of Desolation).
2. They would be trodden down and scattered of the Gentiles.
3. The times of the Gentiles would be fulfilled.
4. Jerusalem would return into the hands of Judah.
5. The generation in which the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled will have men standing from that generation which shall not all pass until they see a desolating sickness cover the land ***and*** see the coming of the Lord.

Did the generation of men who rejected celestial law in the 1890s live to witness these things?

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** said, as recorded in chapter 45 of the Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual:

> Jerusalem will no longer be "trodden down of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24). Again President Smith explained: "When we consider the words of the Savior to his disciples, that the Jews should be scattered and 'Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled,' we have a fair understanding of the meaning of this … verse [D&C 45:30] in this revelation. Jerusalem was trodden down of the Gentiles from the day of its destruction until the close of the year 1917, when it was freed from Turkish rule by General Edmund H. Allenby of the British forces. After the war Palestine became a British mandate, and Great Britain by proclamation declared that country to be a refuge for the Jews, who were invited to return. … It is very significant, however, that Jerusalem is no longer trodden down by the Gentiles and the Jews are again gathering there. ***This is the sign given by our Lord, for the end of the times of the Gentiles.*** We are now in the transition period and shortly the day of the Jew will dawn and the Gospel will be taken to them and to the remnants on this land." (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 1:196–97.)
>
> ("Section 45, 'Looking Forth for the Great Day of the Lord,'" *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 94)

**President Wilford Woodruff** said:

> The Temple at Jerusalem was overthrown until not one stone was left upon another, and the Jews have been scattered and trodden under the feet of the Gentiles now for eighteen hundred years, and so they will remain until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, and that is pretty near.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 18, Discourse 14)

**Elder Parley P. Pratt** in his book, *A Voice of Warning,* explained this crystal clear:

> During all this time the Gentiles have possessed the land of Canaan, and trodden under foot the holy city where their forefathers worshipped the Lord. Now, in this long captivity, the Jews have never lost sight of the promises respecting their return. Their eyes have watched and failed with longing for the day when they might possess again that blessed inheritance bequeathed to their forefathers; when they might again rear their city and temple, and reestablish their priesthood, and worship as in the days of old. Indeed, they have made several attempts to return, but were always frustrated in all their attempts; for it was an unalterable decree, that Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled.
>
> (*A Voice of Warning,* p. 23)

Clearly, older prophets and apostles accepted the Lord's words and believed them; the Jews could not regain Jerusalem until ***after*** the times of the Gentiles was fulfilled. This is also reaffirmed in Joseph Fielding Smith's remarks above, saying that the times were fulfilled and we are now in a transitional period waiting for the times of the Gentiles to end (which will not occur until the Mount of Olives). But, did the Jews regain Jerusalem in a single year? No.

The **Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual** chapter 45 continues,

> When **Joseph Fielding Smith** wrote those words in 1947 [quote given above], Israel had not yet been made a state; they were still under the British mandate. But on 15 May 1948, Israel became an independent nation and declared Jerusalem to be her capital. In the war that followed this declaration, the Jews could maintain control of western Jerusalem only. East Jerusalem became part of the state of Jordan. In general conference in 1966, Elder Smith, now President of the Quorum of the Twelve, said: "Jesus said the Jews would be scattered among all nations and Jerusalem would be trodden down by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles were fulfilled. (Luke 21:24.) The prophecy in Section 45, verses 24–29, of the Doctrine and Covenants regarding the Jews was literally fulfilled. Jerusalem, which was trodden down by the Gentiles,

> is no longer trodden down but is made the home for the Jews. They are returning to Palestine, and by this we may know that the times of the Gentiles are near their close." (In Conference Report, Apr. 1966, p. 13.)
>
> ("Section 45, 'Looking Forth for the Great Day of the Lord,'" *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 94)

It is interesting to note, and the manual continues, that "during the Six-Day War of 1967, Israel conquered the West Bank, including Jerusalem, and for the first time since the city fell to the legions of Titus in A.D. 70, Jerusalem came completely under the control of a Jewish government."

So what do we "plainly" take away from this?

1. The generation of the 1890s was told they would live to see the times of the Gentiles fulfilled.
2. The Jews became no longer trodden down of Gentiles in 1917 at the earliest and 1967 ***at the latest.*** By virtue of this, the times of the Gentiles are now fulfilled no later than 1967. This is 27-77 years from the generation rejecting celestial law in the 1890s, clearly fulfilling that prophecy.
3. There will be "men standing" in that generation that will not all die before they see a desolating sickness sweep the earth, and not all of that generation generally will pass before they see the coming of the Lord (1917–1967).
4. The Savior will return during the lifetime of that generation, for if this generation ***all*** passes before the Lord's return, Christendom should rightfully collapse.

## Identifying the Generation

We have at this point in time an uncanny amount of proof that the year 1917 is the start.

1. Joseph Smith's prophecy of the rising generation (those born as late as 1920)
2. The Lord telling us that the generation who rejects celestial law will live to see the times of the Gentiles fulfilled—this rejection took place in the 1890s
3. Elder Talmage's prophecy of those born in 1917 living to see the ten tribes and their scripture
4. In 1917, the Jews reclaimed their homeland, which was the sign for the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled

There will be "some" born in the year 1917 who will live to see the ten tribes return, as well as Christ come to New Jerusalem. Those born in 1917 became 103 years old in 2020. The oldest people living on the earth today are around 115, meaning we are within the final 10 years until the ten tribes return and Jesus appears to New Jerusalem.

But obviously, "this generation" was not everyone born in a single year, nor was Jerusalem completely "untrodden down of the gentiles" in a single year. There is a range.

Not coincidentally so, the **Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual** teaches what happened 50 years later (a significant number to the house of Israel, a "jubilee"):

> During the Six-Day War of 1967, Israel conquered the West Bank, including Jerusalem, and for the first time since the city fell to the legions of Titus in AD 70, Jerusalem came completely under the control of a Jewish government.
>
> ("Section 45, 'Looking Forth for the Great Day of the Lord,'" *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 94)

So "this generation" is anybody born between 1917 to 1967. Anybody born from 1917–1932 would constitute the old of that generation, or in other words, the "some" mentioned. Anybody born between 1932–1952 would constitute the bulk of the generation, or "a lot," or "men standing from that generation." Those born between 1952–1967 would constitute the babies of that generation, or "almost all" who will live to see the fulfillment of all things. We have already done the years with the old, so if you were to do the years of the bulk, you would have to work with the average life expectancy, not the oldest people alive. The average life expectancy in the USA is 78 (in 3 Nephi 28:2–3 we learn that the age of man is 72), which means that the fulfillments of all these things should take place between the years 2010–2030. Looking at those years what would that make 2020? The hinge point! (President Nelson, *Church News,* 2 January 2020). Most, or almost all, of the babies of that generation, those born between 1952–1967, would/will live to see these events. This means these events have to take place well below the average life expectancy. To make the numbers comfortably below the average life expectancy, I've used 60 years of age, and I believe that to be fair. Using that, it puts the "no later than" dates at 2012–2027 (1952 – 1967 + 60).

We are looking for a period of 14 years, which we will prove later in the series. But for now, let's simply just say that these 14 years are seven years of plenty and seven years of famine. This will become important as we continue to unfold this. The consensus of the data derived from prophecy is that the ten tribes need to return, and New Jerusalem needs to be built, somewhere no later than this time period. It is important here to identify "no later than." Although the time period for the Great and Dreadful Day is set, the time period for the return of the ten tribes, building of New Jerusalem and the Lord coming to New Jerusalem was not set ("even now", D&C 105:1-6). The fulfillment of these events is guaranteed; the generation that will get to redeem and build New Jerusalem is not. Joseph Smith's generation could have built it, and Jesus could have been living with the Saints for almost the last 200 years. That generation and every other subsequent generation has failed.

## On the Clock

The problem? Christ gives a countdown with regards to this prophesy, that the generation in which the time of the gentiles is fulfilled will not all pass away (or die) before Christ's second coming. "Well, what is the problem with this?" I hear one ask. The answer: what if the time frame ticks out and Christ hasn't returned? Well, then Christendom might and frankly should collapse, as the second coming not happening when Christ said it would happen would single handily prove Christendom to be a false religion, as its literal largest prophesy regarding the second coming would then be proven false.

Has there been any precedent for this? The answer is yes. When Jesus was to be born, Samuel the Lamanite prophesied that Christ would be born within 5 years, and at the end of that time, the unbelievers were ready to kill the believers (Helaman 14–16, 3 Nephi 1). Another example is when Jesus Christ himself prophesied that the generation he was then talking to would not all pass before Jerusalem would be destroyed, and not one stone of the temple would be left standing (Luke 21). When 40 years passed away, many obviously would have begun to doubt. But when Titus showed up in 70 A.D., the prophecy was literally fulfilled. There is a precedent for this, and the wicked's response to such prophecies are always the same—threats, persecution, etc.

So what changed post 1917–1967 and why? Even in the church, the talk changed amongst members from "the times of the Gentiles is fulfilled!" and "Christ is coming soon!" (e.g., Joseph Fielding Smith, *Church History and Modern Revelation,* 1:196-97) to "Israel is our greatest ally!" (e.g., Glenn Beck) and "someday ***soon*** the times of the Gentiles ***will be*** fulfilled!" (e.g., James Prout, *The "Last Days" Timeline*). Huh? What happened?

In order to understand what happened, we have to understand Zionism.

## Zionism

Of all the subjects to write on and produce, this was the most important by far. Why is this so important? Because understanding this subject will unlock your understanding of basically everything that is going on geopolitically in the world today. It will open your eyes to time frames and the fragility of them. It is a fascinating subject that was pushed hard by early leaders of the Church and very heavily by all of Christendom in the early 1900s, only to be dropped, scrapped, and now ripped apart. It is the single most important sign for Christians, as well as members of Christ's church in the latter days, to look for with regards to Christ's second coming.

So what is "Zionism"?

**Zionism:** "Jewish nationalist movement that has had as its goal the creation and support of a Jewish national state in Palestine, the ancient homeland of the Jews (Hebrew: Eretz Yisraʾel, 'the Land of Israel'). Though Zionism originated in eastern and central Europe in the latter part of the 19th century, it is in many ways a continuation of the ancient attachment of the Jews and of the Jewish religion to the historical region of Palestine, where one of the hills of ancient Jerusalem was called Zion" (Encyclopaedia Britannica).

Ok, so the Jewish people wanted a Jewish state in Israel just like they used to have years and years ago. Makes sense. Why do Christians care? How did the Jewish people convince Christians to help them recapture their ancient homeland? Why do Christian nations today take such a strong policy of staying out of Israel's policies and letting them completely control themselves, while at the same time defending Israel, spilling the Gentiles' own blood in her defense, giving her Gentile money, etc., the whole while asking for nothing in return? Why do Christian nations today still spout the incorrect line that "Israel is ***our*** greatest ally" when in reality Israel takes Gentile money, blood, etc., and gives nothing back? Why are we okay with this arrangement, or how did Israel convince us that this was a desirable arrangement? It all goes back to Christ's prophecy of the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled—that most significant prophesy that we have already discussed in this chapter.

## The Balfour Declaration

We have already gone over that prophecy in great detail, but it is important to note here that Jewish people don't believe in Christ or His prophesy; however, they did wish to have their own country again. Appealing to Christians, they made the case: "you want Christ to come back? You have to get us back to Israel again," or something similar to that, which was a solid point for both sides. Christians ***do*** believe Christ and His prophesies, and thus believed that the Jews ***did need*** to get back in Jerusalem; Jews did ***not*** believe in Christ, but they did understand that without the Gentiles, they never would get back to Jerusalem or hold her once they captured her (Nephi explains this very thing in 1 Nephi 22 starting in verse 3). Because of this, it was a perceived win-win for Gentile Christian nations to help the Jews reclaim Jerusalem.

In 1917, the British government made a public statement, the Balfour Declaration, in which they announced support for the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. The British empire (allies) knew they would lose the war without America's help, so Zionists struck up a deal in which they promised to exercise their influence to get America into the war in exchange for this mandate from Britain. Zionism flourished in America, as Christians were united in their desire to have Jews reclaim their homeland. The Gentiles gave Israel all they needed to take back their homeland in a fulfillment to the prophecies of Isaiah and the explanation of them found in 1 Nephi 22. It was one of, if not *the,* largest cause of America's entering WWI; WWII simply sealed the deal. Remember, the Lord is in charge, He started these wars for a reason, and this was the reason—to get Jews back to Jerusalem.

The Balfour Declaration could take up an entire chapter, but there are others who have devoted the time to create solid breakdowns of that, and I don't want to bloat this book. The History Channel, Britannica, Israel-Palestine News, etc., are all places where one could go to understand this more clearly. There are also several Latter-day Saint *Ensign* articles written about the history of Israel (e.g., "The Birth of Modern Israel" by W. Cleon Skousen). As I said at the beginning, an understanding of this will unlock your understanding of almost everything geopolitical today.

## The Child's Manipulation

The Jews gained the Christian Gentiles' help in reclaiming Jerusalem based purely off of Zionism, the Gentiles' belief in the prophecy of Jesus regarding the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled. But now that the Jews are back in Jerusalem and the times of the Gentiles is fulfilled, what now?

The Jews never believed in Jesus Christ's second coming; they simply wanted Christians' support in taking back what they believed to be "theirs" (Palestine). Now that the Jews had Jerusalem and Israel, they needed to give The West (Christians) other reasons to continue to provide them with money, bullet sponges, etc. The West (Christendom) took these other reasons hook, line, and sinker, e.g., "Israel is our greatest ally," "Israel provides stability to the region," "The West is based on ***Judeo***-Christian values," etc. The actual relationship is how Nephi explained it in 1 Nephi 22: as the relationship between a nursing mother and her child. Without the nursing mother, the child would die. The child is not the mother's greatest ally; the mother is the child's greatest ally. And if you are a child and you know this, won't you do everything in your power to keep your mother there? The solution was to get Christians to lose their faith and/or get them so confused about the prophecy of the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled that it would no longer be the motivation for the nursing mother. For, once again, the Jews did not believe the prophecy would be fulfilled, and if that remained the nursing mother's primary reason for nursing the child, when the prophecy wasn't fulfilled and the nursing mother realized it, she would re-evaluate her relationship with the child.

Even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints changed their tune on a dime in 1966 and then proceeded to never mention this prophecy again. No seriously, find anything spoken at conference post 1966 regarding it. A citation search for Luke 21:24 and even D&C 45:25–30 will yield you nothing post 1966. Silence. Where did our faith in Christ's prophecies go? Did we ever believe? Was this prophesy misunderstood? Was it too hard to understand? No… Christendom lost their faith in Jesus Christ and His prophecy, and the Jews never had faith in Jesus Christ nor His prophecies. This is a fulfillment to Isaiah's prophecy: "As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths" (Isaiah 3:12).

## False Understanding

There are some who erroneously teach that there are other events that need to happen before the time of the Gentiles is fulfilled, such as a spiritual return of the Jews to Christ or a pulling out of missionaries from Gentile countries, etc. The problems with this are many, but let's start with:

1. It universally removes the plainness of Christ's words, and thus it would make Christ a liar.
2. It voids Joseph Smith's prophecy of the rising generations, Talmage's prophecy of the return of the ten tribes, and Joseph Fielding Smith's identifying the sign as being fulfilled, thus making all of them liars.

If the Savior said, "by the end of this night, you will all flee from me, and Peter, you will deny me 3 times before the cock crows" (Matthew 26:34, Mark 14:30), then Peter denies Jesus twice, the cock crows, then Peter

denies him again, would that be a fulfillment to prophecy? No! If Peter denied Jesus 3 times, the cock crowed, then the disciples fled, would that be a fulfillment to prophecy? No! If the disciples fled, the cock crowed, and then Peter denied him 3 times, would that be a fulfillment of prophecy? No! The order matters, and the thing that determines everything else in this example is the placement of the cock crowing. Why? Because the cock crowing is the end—you know that everything else has to happen before the cock crows. Which means that everything that the Lord prophesied has to take place at or before the cock crowing. In this case, the disciples fled, Peter denied Jesus twice, and as Peter was denying the third time, the cock crowed—all the events had to happen at or before.

Like the example above, Jesus prophesied of events that would happen, and then prophesied they would happen before this specific event, the event being "when Jerusalem is no longer trodden down by the Gentiles" or "when the remnant of Jews who were scattered from Jerusalem among all nations are once again gathered to Jerusalem" (D&C 45:24–25). Meaning, just like the story above, Jesus gave three "denyings," or prophecies, that needed to happen before that event:

1. It will be in a time of great social turmoil
2. The Gentiles will have for the most part rejected the fulness of gospel (celestial law)
3. The times of the Gentiles would be fulfilled

(see *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 94)

He then stated that the cock crowing, or the end point of these events, would be when Jerusalem is no longer trodden down by the gentiles and the Jews are gathered again ***physically.*** Meaning, if any of the points 1–3 occur after the Jews reclaim Jerusalem and Jerusalem is no longer trodden down of the gentiles, Jesus would be a liar. Just like if Peter hadn't denied 3 times before the cock crowed, or the disciples fled after the cock crowed, etc. Could events 1–3 occur at the same time or during the same time period? Yes. But could any of these events occur after "the cock crowing"? No. Because Jesus said, and Joseph Smith translated it to make it even more clear, that Jerusalem would be trodden down, owned, ruled, etc., by the Gentiles ***until*** the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled and that the Jews would remain in their scattered state among all nations without a country to call their own, without Jerusalem, without Israel, ***until*** the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. If Jerusalem is no longer trodden down by the Gentiles and is once again peopled by the Jews, the times of the Gentiles by definition ***are*** fulfilled, or Jesus is a liar. Period.

**Doctrine and Covenants 1**

> **37** Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled
>
> **38** What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.

A quote from **Elder Orson Pratt** is used out of context to purport or opine that a different event signals the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled, ***not*** Jerusalem no longer being trodden down. The problem? They have to take it ***woefully*** out of context. Here is the full quote with all the context:

> ***After the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled,*** which period is set in the mind of God, another scene will open up before the world, in the grand panorama of the last days. What is that? The downfall of the Gentile nations. Says one– "Whom do you call Gentiles?" Every nation excepting the literal descendants of Israel. We, the Latter-day Saints, are Gentiles; in other words, we have come from among the Gentile nations, though many of us may have the blood of Israel within our veins. When God has called out the righteous, when the warning voice has been sufficiently proclaimed among these Gentile nations, and the Lord says "It is enough," he will also say to his servants–"O, ye, my servants, come home, come out from the midst of these Gentile nations, where you have labored and borne testimony for so long a period; come out from among them, for they are not worthy; they do not receive the message that I have sent forth, they do not repent of their sins; come out from their midst, ***their times are fulfilled.*** Seal up the testimony among them and bind up the law." What then? Then the word of the Lord will be–"O, ye, my servants, I have a new commission for you. Instead of going forth to convert the Gentile nations, go unto the remnants of the house of Israel that are scattered in the four quarters of the earth. Go and proclaim to them that the times of their dispersion are accomplished; ***that the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled;*** that the time has arrived for my people Israel, who have been scattered for generations in a dark and cloudy day, to gather unto their own homes again, and to build up old Jerusalem on its former heap. And then will commence the gathering of the Jews to old Jerusalem; then the ten tribes in the northern regions, wherever they may be, after having been concealed from the nations for twenty-five hundred years, will come forth and will return, as Jeremiah has said, from the north country. A great company will come, and they will sing in the height of Zion…
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 18, Discourse 7)

How can the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, then sometime later when missionaries get called home be fulfilled again, and then when missionaries preach to scattered Israel be fulfilled ***again?*** That is, three different time periods, ***all*** of which are "when the times of the Gentiles is fulfilled"? A time period that Orson Pratt said in the same quote "is set in the mind of God"? Does this sound "set in the mind of God"? God forbid. Orson Pratt clearly addressed this as "what happens ***after*** the time of the gentiles is fulfilled." So what is he saying?

1. The time of the Gentiles is fulfilled, and a "transitional period" takes place, a period which we have already addressed.
2. During the transitional period, when the warning voice has been sufficiently proclaimed among these Gentile nations, the Lord will progressively call missionaries home ***because*** the time of the Gentiles ***has been fulfilled*** (past tense, transitioning priorities and focus).
3. Eventually, the missionary force will be entirely focused on scattered Israel and the Jews ***because*** the time of the gentiles ***has been fulfilled*** and is nearing its end ("the downfall of the Gentile nations").

The other two events happen ***because*** the times of the Gentiles have been fulfilled. It gives rationale and reason for the action. It is not a signifier of the end of the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled; it is a prerequisite. The times of the Gentiles being fulfilled was not only the sign of Christ's imminent return, but also the sign for the times of the Gentiles ending, or as Elder Orson Pratt said, "the downfall of the Gentile nations."

# The Parable of the Fig: A Marked Generation

## Multiple Interpretations

As you study this parable, consider the following statement by **Elder Dallin H. Oaks** of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: "[The Savior's] parables had multiple meanings or applications according to the spiritual maturity of the listener. They had a message for both children and gospel scholars" ("Scripture Reading and Revelation," *Ensign,* Jan. 1995, 8). Look for multiple meanings and applications in this parable (see also Bible Dictionary, "Parables").

("Unit 22: Day 1, Doctrine and Covenants 101:43–101; 102," *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students*).

There are many interpretations to parables. If you have heard somebody interpret a parable or teach a parable in a different way, good for you and good for them. Someone else's interpretation does not invalidate learning gained from other interpretations. So we need to understand, going into any parable, that there will be multiple interpretations and multiple ways to apply the parable.

## Unlocking the Primary Interpretation

In this book, I will to go over parables of the utmost importance that have been used so often in their tertiary forms that most members don't understand or even know the primary interpretation of the parables. Can parables be interpreted or likened in multiple ways for the benefit of man? Yes. Can washing the vase and the dishes and placing them on a clean cloth add symbolic weight to traditions and ordinances (Mark 7:4–23)? Yes. The problem comes when the washing of the dishes in the eyes of the participant becomes the primary activity and they neglect the actual primary purpose. Jesus, pointing the Jews towards their behavior in doing this very thing, said, "[you] have omitted the weightier matters of the law" (Matthew 23:23–28). Understanding how the Lord teaches is crucial to understanding the primary intent of the parable. Joseph Smith had a laugh at a member who thought that the beast kingdoms described in Daniel's vision were symbols of God's kingdoms. Joseph Smith said, "the Lord would never make use of a figure of a beast nor any of the brute kind to represent His Kingdom" (*TPJS,* p. 289). Joseph Smith taught that every jot and tittle of the word had to be literally fulfilled, and this included parables, visions, etc. Joseph Smith, in identifying that the Lord even in a parable or vision wouldn't use something ungodly to represent something godly, clarifies that even the symbols in parables have to make sense. Joseph Smith also taught on another occasion the best way to go about trying to find this primary purpose: "I have a key by which I understand the scriptures. I inquire, what was the question which drew out the answer, or caused Jesus to utter the parable?" (*TPJS,* pp. 276–277) Joseph then goes on to explain that the question being answered is the primary interpretation, and "all straining on this point is a bubble" (*TPJS,* p. 277).

So the first step to understanding all parables is to answer what drew it out—what question was the Savior answering? If you find that your interpretation doesn't directly answer the question that the Savior was being asked, you can then know your interpretation is not the primary interpretation.

So the first thing we shall do in all parable breakdowns is answer "What drew out the parable? What question was being asked?"

## What Drew Out the Parable? What is the Question?

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

**24** And this I have told you ***concerning Jerusalem;*** and when that day shall come, shall a remnant be scattered among all nations;

**25** But ***they shall be gathered again; but they shall remain until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.***

**26** And in that day shall be heard of wars and rumors of wars, and the whole earth shall be in commotion, and men's hearts shall fail them, and they shall say that Christ delayeth his coming until the end of the earth.

**27** And the love of men shall wax cold, and iniquity shall abound.

**28** And when the times of the Gentiles is come in, a light shall break forth among them that sit in darkness, and it shall be the fulness of my gospel;

**29** But they receive it not; for they perceive not the light, and they turn their hearts from me because of the precepts of men.

**30** ***And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.***

**31** ***And there shall be men standing in that generation, that shall not pass until*** they shall see ***an overflowing scourge; for a desolating sickness shall cover the land***

**32** But my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die.

**33** And there shall be earthquakes also in divers places, and many desolations; yet men will harden their hearts against me, and they will take up the sword, one against another, and they will kill one another.

**34** And now, when I the Lord had spoken these words unto my disciples, they were troubled.

**35** And I said unto them: Be not troubled, for, when all these things shall come to pass, ye may know that the promises which have been made unto you shall be fulfilled.

**36** And when the light shall begin to break forth, it shall be with them like unto a parable which I will show you—

**37** Ye ***look and behold the figtrees, and ye see them with your eyes, and ye say when they begin to shoot forth, and their leaves are yet tender, that summer is now nigh at hand;***

**38** Even so it shall be in that day when they shall see all these things, then shall they know that the hour is nigh.

**Doctrine and Covenants 35**

**16** And they shall learn the parable of the fig tree, for ***even now already summer is nigh.***

**17** And I have sent forth the fulness of my gospel by the hand of my servant Joseph; and in weakness have I blessed him;

The Savior was asked about the Jews being scattered, the promise of their return back to Jerusalem and the signs leading up the second coming. And he used the parable of the fig to further explain what he had just taught regarding those things. So, if our breakdown doesn't answer these fundamental questions we have not understood the primary interpretation of the parable.

## Identifying the Figures

So, what are the figures being represented in this parable, and how do they directly relate back to what Jesus had taught from verse 24–33? There is springtime, summer, fig leaves, and figs—those are the major themes of this parable. And what was Jesus just teaching about directly before this? The times of the Gentiles, which was covered in the previous chapter. Therefore, we know that the parable of the fig deals with and relates directly back to the times of the Gentiles. And what is the entire purpose of the Lord's teaching of the times of the Gentiles? It is to identify a generation. Do not seasons represent perfectly a new generation of men (i.e. spring with young leaves and sprouts shooting forth)? And in the summertime, this generation is now fully grown—adults, figs.

1. **Springtime:** The time period in which the times of the Gentiles is fulfilled
2. **Fig Leaves or Sprouts:** The generation, i.e., those born at that time
3. **Summer:** The period of time in which the figs are expected to become ripe fruit, i.e., the lifetime of the generation in which the time of the gentiles is fulfilled
4. **Figs:** The generation in which the time of the Gentiles was fulfilled, now in adulthood

A deeper understanding of this parable, as well as additional figures, can be gained by bringing in other scriptures.

**Revelation 6**

> **13** And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her ***untimely figs,*** when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

I.e., Figs that ripen late, hanging on the tree even into the ***winter.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

> **87** For not many days hence and the earth shall tremble and reel to and fro as a drunken man; and the sun shall hide his face, and shall refuse to give light; and the moon shall be bathed in blood; and the stars shall become exceedingly angry, ***and shall cast themselves down as a fig that falleth from off a fig tree.***
>
> **88** And after your testimony cometh wrath and indignation upon the people.
>
> **89** For after your testimony cometh the testimony of earthquakes, that shall cause groanings in the midst of her, and men shall fall upon the ground and shall not be able to stand.
>
> **90** And also cometh the testimony of the voice of thunderings, and the voice of lightnings, and the voice of tempests, and the voice of the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds.
>
> **91** And all things shall be in commotion; and surely, men's hearts shall fail them; for fear shall come upon all people.

**Doctrine and Covenants 112**

> **24** Behold, vengeance cometh speedily upon the inhabitants of the earth, a day of wrath, a day of burning, a day of desolation, of weeping, of mourning, and of lamentation; and as a whirlwind it shall come upon all the face of the earth, saith the Lord.
>
> **25** ***And upon my house shall it begin, and from my house shall it go forth, saith the Lord;***
>
> **26** First among those among you, saith the Lord, who have professed to know my name and have not known me, and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house, saith the Lord.

**Alma 34**

> **30** And now, my brethren, I would that, after ye have received so many witnesses, seeing that the holy scriptures testify of these things, ye ***come forth and bring fruit unto repentance.***
>
> **31** Yea, I would that ye would come forth and harden not your hearts any longer; for behold, now is the time and the day of your salvation; and therefore, ***if ye will repent and harden not your hearts, immediately shall the great plan of redemption be brought about unto you.***
>
> **32** For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors.
>
> **33** And now, as I said unto you before, as ye have had so many witnesses, therefore, I beseech of you that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; for after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed.

**Doctrine and Covenants 97**

> **7** ***The ax is laid at the root of the trees; and every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire. I, the Lord, have spoken it.***
>
> **8** Verily I say unto you, all among them who know their hearts are honest, and are broken, and their spirits contrite, and are willing to observe their covenants by sacrifice—yea, every sacrifice which I, the Lord, shall command—they are accepted of me.
>
> **9** For I, the Lord, will cause them to bring forth as a very fruitful tree which is planted in a goodly land, by a pure stream, that yieldeth much precious fruit.
>
> **10** Verily I say unto you, that it is my will that a house should be built unto me in the land of Zion, like unto the pattern which I have given you.
>
> **11** Yea, let it be built speedily, by the tithing of my people.
>
> **12** Behold, this is the tithing and the sacrifice which I, the Lord, require at their hands, that there may be a house built unto me for the salvation of Zion—
>
> **...**
>
> **22** For behold, and lo, ***vengeance cometh speedily upon the ungodly as the whirlwind;*** and who shall escape it?
>
> **23** ***The Lord's scourge shall pass over by night and by day, and the report thereof shall vex all people;*** yea, it shall not be stayed until the Lord come;
>
> **24** For the indignation of the Lord is kindled against their abominations and all their wicked works.
>
> **25** Nevertheless, Zion shall escape if she observe to do all things whatsoever I have commanded her.
>
> **26** But if she observe not to do whatsoever I have commanded her, I will visit her according to all her works, with sore affliction, with pestilence, with plague, with sword, with vengeance, with devouring fire.

These verses in Doctrine and Covenants 97 relate directly to the Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees found in Doctrine and Covenants 101, specifically verses 47–51 and 51–56. That parable is covered in a subsequent chapter.

## New, Additional Figures

1. **Untimely Figs/Unrepentant Lives:** Those members of that generation who failed to become ripe fruit, i.e., those "who have professed to know [the Lord but] have not known [Him]" (D&C 112:26)
2. **Mighty Wind/Whirlwind:** The judgements of God to be poured out, first on the untimely figs
3. **Winter/Night of Darkness:** When the cup of iniquity is full, time has run out, and the day of grace has passed them

So, in summary and chronologically we have:

| Spring | Summer | Winter |
|---|---|---|
| The Generation is Born | The Generation's Lifetime | The Generation as Elders |
| Times of the Gentiles fulfilled | Promises fulfilled to Israel (Jews back to Jerusalem) | Generation matures slothfully, whirlwind, judgements |
| Fig Sprouts, Leaves | Figs | Untimely Figs |

## Spring: Looking for the Leaves

**Joseph Smith** (1839)

> Whatever you may hear about me or Kirtland, take no notice of it; for if it be a place of refuge, the devil will use his greatest efforts to trap the Saints. You must make yourselves acquainted with those men who like Daniel pray three times a day toward the House of the Lord. Look to the Presidency and receive instruction. Every man who is afraid, covetous, will be taken in a snare. The time is soon coming, when no man will have any peace but in Zion and her stakes.
>
> I saw men hunting the lives of their own sons, and brother murdering brother, women killing their own daughters, and daughters seeking the lives of their mothers. I saw armies arrayed against armies. I saw blood, desolation, fires. The Son of Man has said that the mother shall be against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother. These things are at our doors. They will follow the Saints of God from city to city. Satan will rage, and the spirit of the devil is now enraged. I know not how soon these things will take place; but with a view of them, shall I cry peace? No; I will lift up my voice and testify of them. How long you will have good crops, and the famine be kept off, I do not know; when the fig tree leaves, know then that the summer is nigh at hand.
>
> (*History of the Church,* 3:390–91)

**Wilford Woodruff**

> As I before stated, so say I again, the Gospel of Christ requires faith all the day long, for no man can continue faithful to the end without it. God has set his hand a second time to build up that kingdom which Daniel was permitted to see in vision, and to establish that Zion in the mountains which Isaiah saw. He has set his hand, for the last time, to gather together all things which are in heaven and on earth which are in Christ, unto himself. The day has come when the Lord has sent forth a proclamation to warn the nations to prepare for his second coming; and the ***signs of both heaven and earth all indicate the coming of the Son of Man, which is near at the door. No man knows the day or the hour when Christ will come, but the generation is clearly pointed out, the fig tree is leaving, and great changes are near at hand.***
>
> ("Faith, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses,* Volume 19, Discourse 50, p. 357)

**Wilford Woodruff**

> What other people on the face of the earth are preparing for Jesus Christ? The Lord Jesus Christ is coming to reign on earth. The world may say that he delays his coming until the end of the earth. But they know neither the thoughts nor the ways of the Lord. The Lord will not delay his coming because of their unbelief, and the signs both in heaven and earth indicate that it is near. *The fig trees are leafing in sight of all the nations of the earth, and if they had the Spirit of God they could see and understand them.*
>
> ("Home Manufacture, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses,* Volume 16, Discourse 6, p. 32)

**Wilford Woodruff**

> But one thing is certain, ***though the Lord has not revealed the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man shall come, he has pointed out the generation, and the signs predicted as the fore-runners of that great event have begun to appear in the heavens and on the earth, and they will continue until all is consummated.***
>
> (*Deseret News: Semi-Weekly,* February 4, 1873, 2; referenced in "Chapter 24: Preparing for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ," *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff*, p. 253)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

> "Question: Does or will anyone know when the Lord will come? Answer: As to the day and hour, No; as to the generation, Yes. Question: Who shall know the generation? Answer: The Saints, the children of light, those who can read the signs of the times, those who treasure up the Lord's word so they will not be deceived, will know the generation.
>
> (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 1:665–66).

## Summer: The Figs

**President Spencer W. Kimball**

> The leaves are commencing to show on the fig tree.
>
> (Referenced by Elder Bernard P. Brockbank, "The Leaves Are Commencing to Show on the Fig Tree," General Conference, May 1976)

**Neal A. Maxwell**

> The Savior has told us that just as when the fig tree puts forth its leaves, we may know that summer is nigh, so it will be with his second coming (see Luke 21:28–30) The foreseen summer of circumstances ***is now upon us.*** Let us not, therefore, complain of the heat!
>
> ("The Net Gathers of Every Kind," General Conference, October 1980)

## Winter: The Millennials

**Spiritual Whirlwinds**

> By Elder Neil L. Andersen
> Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
>
> "Don't let the whirlwinds drag you down. These are your days—to stand strong as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ."
>
> I greet you this morning—***especially the young people*** who are both here in the Conference Center and throughout the world. ***Yours is a chosen generation of destiny, and I speak especially to you.***
>
> Many years ago while we were visiting our family in Florida, a tornado touched down not too far from us. One woman living in a mobile home went into her bathroom for safety. The mobile home began to shake. A few moments passed. Then she heard her neighbor's voice: "I am here in the front room." Coming out of the bathroom, to her great astonishment, she discovered that the tornado had lifted and carried her mobile home through the air, landing it perfectly upright on the top of her neighbor's mobile home.
>
> ***My young friends, the world will not glide calmly toward the Second Coming of the Savior. The scriptures declare that "all things shall be in commotion."*** Brigham Young said, "It was revealed to me in the commencement of this Church, that the Church would spread, prosper, grow and extend, and that in proportion to the spread of the Gospel among the nations of the earth, so would the power of Satan rise."
>
> ... ***The whirlwinds in your youth, like the wind against a young tree, can increase your spiritual strength, preparing you for the years ahead (April 2014).***
>
> How do you prepare for your whirlwinds? "Remember ... it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, ... his shafts in the whirlwind, ... when all his hail and his mighty storm

shall beat upon you, it shall have no power … to drag you down … because of the rock upon which ye are built." This is your safety in the whirlwind.

President Thomas S. Monson has said, "Where once the standards of the Church and the standards of society were mostly compatible, now there is a wide chasm between us, and it's growing ever wider." This chasm, for some, stirs strong spiritual whirlwinds. Let me share an example.

This past month the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve published a letter to leaders of the Church across the world. In part it read: "Changes in the civil law do not, indeed cannot, change the moral law that God has established. God expects us to uphold and keep His commandments regardless of divergent opinions or trends in society. His law of chastity is clear: sexual relations are proper only between a man and a woman who are legally and lawfully wedded as husband and wife. We urge you to review … the doctrine contained in 'The Family: A Proclamation to the World.'"

As the world slips away from the Lord's law of chastity, we do not. President Monson said: "The Savior of mankind described Himself as being in the world but not of the world. We also can be in the world but not of the world as we reject false concepts and false teachings and remain true to that which God has commanded."

While many governments and well-meaning individuals have redefined marriage, the Lord has not. In the very beginning, God initiated marriage between a man and a woman—Adam and Eve. He designated the purposes of marriage to go far beyond the personal satisfaction and fulfillment of adults to, more importantly, advancing the ideal setting for children to be born, reared, and nurtured. Families are the treasure of heaven.

Why do we continue to talk about this? As Paul said, "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." As Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, we have the responsibility to teach our Creator's plan for His children and to warn of the consequences of disregarding His commandments.

Recently, I spoke with a Laurel from the United States. I quote from her email:

"This past year some of my friends on Facebook began posting their position on marriage. Many favored same-sex marriage, and several LDS youth indicated they 'liked' the postings. I made no comment.

"I decided to declare my belief in traditional marriage in a thoughtful way.

"With my profile picture, I added the caption 'I believe in marriage between a man and a woman.' Almost instantly I started receiving messages. 'You are selfish.' 'You are judgmental.' One compared me to a slave owner. And I received this post from a great friend who is a strong member of the Church: 'You need to catch up with the times. Things are changing and so should you.'

"I did not fight back," she said, "but I did not take my statement down."

She concludes: "Sometimes, as President Monson said, 'You have to stand alone.' Hopefully as youth, we will stand together in being true to God and to the teachings of His living prophets."

…

If you have a question about counsel from the leaders of the Church, please discuss your honest concerns with your parents and leaders. You need the strength that comes from trusting the Lord's prophets. President Harold B. Lee said: "The only safety we have as members of this church is to … learn to give heed to the words and commandments that the Lord shall give through His prophet. … There will be some things that take patience and faith. You may not like what comes. … It may contradict your political views … your social views … interfere with … your social life. But if you listen to these things, as if from the mouth of the Lord Himself, … 'the gates of hell shall not prevail against you … and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you …' (D&C 21:6)." …

The Lord has given you another way to stand firm, a spiritual gift more powerful than the whirlwinds of the adversary! He said, "Stand … in holy places, and be not moved" (D&C 45:32, 87:8). …

My young brothers and sisters, how we love you, admire you, and pray for you. Don't let the whirlwinds drag you down. These are your days—to stand strong as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Footnote: Helaman 7:9 "But behold, I am consigned that these are my days, and that my soul shall be filled with sorrow because of this the wickedness of my brethren.")

Build more firmly your foundation upon the rock of your Redeemer.

Treasure more completely His incomparable life and teachings.

Follow more diligently His example and His commandments.

Embrace more deeply His love, His mercy and grace, and the powerful gifts of His Atonement.

As you do, I promise you that you will see the whirlwinds for what they are—tests, temptations, distractions, or challenges to help you grow. And as you live righteously year after year, I assure you that your experiences will confirm to you again and again that Jesus is the Christ. The spiritual rock under your feet will be solid and secure. You will rejoice that God has placed you here to be a part of the final preparations for Christ's glorious return.

The Savior said, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." This is His promise to you. I know this promise is real. I know that He lives, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

("Spiritual Whirlwinds," General Conference, April 2014)

It is interesting to note that in this talk, a generation was clearly being addressed and the judgments (i.e., whirlwinds) had already begun (with the Family Proclamation being, once again, central to that). We will go over the desolation and scourge in other chapters, but an important tie-in to make now would be understanding the connection between these spritiual whirlwinds, which are causing mass spiritual death currently in the Church and in the world, and the following:

**Isaiah 3**

**13** The Lord standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people.

**14** The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses.

**15** What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord God of hosts.

**…**

**25** Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war.

**26** And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground.

**The Family: A Proclamation to the World**

We warn that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God. Further, we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets.

**Becoming True Millennials**

President Russell M. Nelson
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

An Evening with President Russell M. Nelson
Worldwide Devotional for Young Adults • January 10, 2016 •
Brigham Young University–Hawaii

I bring you greetings and love from the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. We are thankful for your devotion to the Lord and His restored gospel. We are grateful for each time you stand up and speak up for truth—***especially when it is not popular.***

Many people refer to you as *Millennials.* I'll admit that when researchers refer to you by that word and describe what their studies reveal about you—your likes and dislikes, your feelings and inclinations, your strengths and weaknesses—I'm uncomfortable. There is something about the way they use the term *Millennial* that bothers me. And frankly, I am less interested in what the *experts* have to say about you than what the Lord has told me about you.

When I pray about you and ask the Lord how *He* feels about you, I feel something far different from what the researchers say. Spiritual impressions I've received about you lead me to believe that the term *Millennial* may actually be perfect for you. But for a much different reason than the experts may ever understand.

The term *Millennial* is perfect for you if that term reminds you of who you *really* are and what your purpose in life *really* is. A True Millennial is one who was taught and did teach the gospel of Jesus Christ premortally and who made covenants with our Heavenly Father there about courageous things—even *morally* courageous things—that you would do while here on earth.

A True Millennial is a man or woman whom God trusted enough to send to earth during the most compelling dispensation in the history of this world. A True Millennial is a man or woman who lives now to help prepare the people of this world for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and His millennial reign. Make no mistake about it—you were born to be a True Millennial.

The question is "How can you stand and live as a True Millennial?" I have four recommendations.

## Learn Who You Really Are

My first recommendation: Learn who you *really* are.

Take time to think prayerfully about these facts:

- You are an elect son or daughter of God.
- You are created in His image.
- You were taught in the spirit world to prepare you for anything and everything you would encounter during this latter part of these latter days. That teaching endures within you!

You are living in the "eleventh hour." The Lord has declared that this is the last time that He will call laborers into His vineyard to gather the elect from the four quarters of the earth.[2] And you were sent to participate in this gathering. Again and again I have seen firsthand the powerful influence of True Millennials as they bring others to a knowledge of the truth. This is part of your identity and your purpose as the seed of Abraham!

**Footnote 2: Doctrine and Covenants 33:3-6**

**3** For behold, the field is white already to harvest; and it is the eleventh hour, and the last time that I shall call laborers into my vineyard.

**4** And my vineyard has become corrupted every whit; and there is none which doeth good save it be a few; and they err in many instances because of priestcrafts, all having corrupt minds.

**5** And verily, verily, I say unto you, that this church have I established and called forth out of the wilderness.

**6** And even so will I gather mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, even as many as will believe in me, and hearken unto my voice.

True Millennials… know who they really are. They are devout disciples of Jesus Christ who instinctively seize every opportunity to help themselves and others prepare for the millennial reign of our Savior.

Therefore, my first recommendation is to learn *for yourselves* who you really are. Ask your Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, how He feels about you and your mission here on earth. If you ask with real intent, over time the Spirit will whisper the life-changing truth to you. Record those impressions and review them often, and follow through with exactness.

I promise you that when you begin to catch even a glimpse of how your Heavenly Father sees you and what He is counting on you to do for Him, your life will never be the same!

## Expect and Prepare to Accomplish the Impossible

My second recommendation: ***Expect and prepare to accomplish the impossible.***

God has always asked His covenant children to do difficult things. Because you are covenant-keeping sons and daughters of God, living in the latter part of these latter days, the Lord will ask *you* to do difficult things. You can count on it—Abrahamic tests did not stop with Abraham.[4]

President Nelson tells the Millennials to "expect and prepare to accomplish the impossible." He then tells them that we are living in the latter part of the latter days, and the Lord will ask us to do difficult things. He then references Doctrine and Covenants 101.

**Footnote 4: Doctrine and Covenants 101:4-5**

**4** Therefore, they must needs be chastened and tried, even as Abraham, who was commanded to offer up his only son.

**5** For all those who will not endure chastening, but deny me, cannot be sanctified.

By the end of this book, you will become intimately acquainted with Doctrine and Covenants 101 and what the Lord expects in the latter part of the last days.

I know how unnerving it can be to be asked to do something that seems far beyond your capacity. … But the Lord is able to do His own work, and I [have been] privileged to watch the unfolding of one miracle after another—always, and only, *after* I had brought my best thinking, my most courageous efforts, and my most fervent prayers to the task.

…

As a True Millennial whom the Lord can count on, *you* will make history too! You will be asked to accept challenging assignments and become an instrument in the Lord's hands. And He will enable you to accomplish the impossible.

How will you accomplish the impossible? By doing whatever it takes to strengthen your faith in Jesus Christ by increasing your understanding of the doctrine taught in His restored Church and by relentlessly seeking truth. As a True Millennial, anchored in pure doctrine, when you are asked to do impossible things, you will be able to step forward with faith and dogged persistence and cheerfully do all that lies in your power to fulfill the purposes of the Lord.[6]

**Footnote 6: Doctrine and Covenants 123:17**

**17** Therefore, dearly beloved brethren, let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power; and then may we stand still, with the utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God, and for his arm to be revealed.

I'd be willing to bet most people didn't realize that when President Nelson was quoting "let us cheerfully do all that lies in our power," he was referencing the day in which the Lord would make bare his arm in the eyes of all nations. We will get into that more specifically in later chapters.

You will have days when you will be thoroughly discouraged. So, pray for courage not to give up! You will need that strength because it will become less and less popular to be a Latter-day Saint. Sadly, some whom you thought were your friends will betray you. And some things will simply seem unfair.

However, I promise you that as you follow Jesus Christ, you will find sustained peace and true joy. As you keep your covenants with increasing precision, and as you defend the Church and kingdom of God on the earth today, the Lord will bless you with strength and wisdom to accomplish the impossible.

### Learn How to Access the Power of Heaven

My third recommendation: Learn how to access the power of heaven.

Every one of us has questions. Seeking to learn, understand, and recognize truth is a vital part of our mortal experience. Much of my life has been spent in research. You too will learn best by asking inspired questions.

...

Our Heavenly Father and His Son stand ready to respond to your questions through the ministering of the Holy Ghost. But it is up to you to learn how to qualify for and receive those answers.

Where can you start? Begin by spending more time in holy places. The temple is a holy place. So is the chapel, where you make new sacramental covenants each Sunday. I invite you also to make your apartment, your dorm, your home, or your room a holy place where you can safely retreat from the dark distractions of the world.

Prayer is a key. Pray to know what to stop doing and what to start doing. Pray to know what to add to your environment and what to remove so the Spirit can be with you in abundance.

Plead with the Lord for the gift of discernment. Then live and work to be worthy to receive that gift so that when confusing events arise in the world, you will know exactly what is true and what is not.

Serve with love. Loving service to those who have lost their way or who are wounded in spirit opens your heart to personal revelation.

Spend more time—much more time—in places where the Spirit is present. That means more time with friends who are seeking to have the Spirit with them. Spend more time on your knees in prayer, more time in the scriptures, more time in family history work, more time in the temple. I promise you that as you consistently give the Lord a generous portion of your time, He will multiply the remainder.

...

My dear brothers and sisters, you have as much access to the mind and will of the Lord ***for your own life*** as we Apostles do ***for His Church.*** Just as the Lord requires *us* to seek and ponder, fast and pray, and study and wrestle with difficult questions, He requires *you* to do the same as you seek answers to your own questions.

...

My dear young friends, you can know the mind and will of the Lord ***for your own life.*** You do not have to wonder if you are where the Lord needs ***you*** to be or if ***you*** are doing what He needs ***you*** to do. You can know! The Holy Ghost will tell you "all things what ***ye*** should do."

### Follow the Prophets

My fourth recommendation: Follow the prophets.

Prophets see ahead. They see the harrowing dangers the adversary has placed or will yet place in our path. Prophets also foresee the grand possibilities and privileges awaiting those who listen *with the intent to obey.* I know this is true! I have experienced it for myself over and over again.

The Lord has promised us that He will never allow the prophet to lead us astray. President Harold B. Lee declared: "You may not like what comes from the authority of the Church. It may contradict your political views. It may contradict your social views. It may interfere with some of your social life. But if you listen to these things, as if from the mouth of the Lord Himself, with patience and faith, the promise is that 'the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name's glory' (D&C 21:6)."

You may not always understand every declaration of a living prophet. But when you know a prophet is a prophet, you can approach the Lord in humility and faith and ask for your own witness about whatever His prophet has proclaimed.

Around 41 B.C., many Nephites joined the Church, and the Church prospered. But secret combinations also began to grow, and many of their cunning leaders hid among the people and were difficult to detect. As the people became more and more prideful, many of the Nephites made "a mock of that which was sacred, denying the spirit of prophecy and of revelation."[11]

**Footnote 11: Helaman 4:12–13**

**12** And it was because of the pride of their hearts, because of their exceeding riches, yea, it was because of their oppression to the poor, withholding their food from the hungry, withholding their clothing from the naked, and smiting their humble brethren upon the cheek, making a mock of that which was sacred, denying the spirit of prophecy and of revelation, murdering, plundering, lying, stealing, committing adultery, rising up in great contentions, and deserting away into the land of Nephi, among the Lamanites—

**13** And because of this their great wickedness, and their boastings in their own strength, they were left in their own strength; therefore they did not prosper, but were afflicted and smitten, and driven before the Lamanites, until they had lost possession of almost all their lands.

Those same threats are among us today. The somber reality is that there are "servants of Satan" embedded throughout society. So be very careful about whose counsel you follow.[13]

**Footnote 13: Helaman 12:23**

**23** Therefore, blessed are they who will repent and hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; for these are they that shall be saved.

These two scriptures that President Nelson references are fantastic segues for the next chapter, "Disobedience Necessitates Suffering."

My beloved brothers and sisters, you were born to be True Millennials! You are a chosen generation, fore-determined by God to do a remarkable work—to help prepare the people of this world for the Second Coming of the Lord.

Now, as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, I bless each one of you, as though I had my hands upon your heads, with the ability to become the True Millennial you were born to be. I bless you to have the desire and ability to learn your true identity and purpose, that you will expect and prepare to do "impossible" things, that you will be undaunted in your efforts to learn how to access the powers of heaven to help you solve your problems and answer your questions. And I bless you to follow the prophets with exactness, to feel peace in your heart as you do so. I bless you to know and feel how much the Lord loves you and how much confidence He has in you.

... Jesus Christ is our Savior. This is His Church. We are His people! I so testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

("Becoming True Millennials," Worldwide Devotional for Young Adults, January 10, 2016)

# Disobedience Necessitates Suffering

## Humble vs. Compelled

**Elder Robert R. Steuer**

President Brigham Young taught our "first and foremost duty [is] to seek the Lord until we open the path of communication from God to our own soul." Shortly after his death, the Prophet Joseph Smith appeared in a dream to Brigham Young and instructed him: "Tell the people to be humble and faithful, and be sure to keep the spirit of the Lord and it will lead them right. Be careful and not turn away the small still voice; it will teach them what to do and where to go; it will yield the fruits of the Kingdom."

How do we ignite this power of divine instruction in our lives? First, we need to start with a willingness to be instructed. While many naturally hunger and thirst after righteousness, others may be compelled to be humble. Some of us, rather than follow instructions or change ourselves, would simply like to change the rules. Naaman certainly wanted to be rid of his leprous flesh but went away in a rage when told by the prophet's messenger to simply wash seven times in the River Jordan. It was inconvenient, a little thing, and he felt that the rivers in his land were better than the Jordan. But his leprosy was cured as he listened to his servants, changed his mind, and did "according to the saying of the man of God." He was dramatically shown that there was a prophet and a God in Israel. We too must realize that God has governing laws and that His wisdom is greater than our own.

("Being Teachable," General Conference, April 2002)

**Alma 32**

**14** And now, as I said unto you, that because ye were compelled to be humble ye were blessed, do ye not suppose that they are more blessed who truly humble themselves because of the word?

**15** Yea, he that truly humbleth himself, and repenteth of his sins, and endureth to the end, the same shall be blessed—yea, much more blessed than they who are compelled to be humble because of their exceeding poverty.

**Alma 32:8–16. "Blessed Are They Who Humble Themselves"**

**Bishop Richard C. Edgley** of the Presiding Bishopric taught that humility and submissiveness are virtues allowing one to access gospel blessings: "Many of us live or work in an environment where humility is often misunderstood and considered a weakness. Not many corporations or institutions include humility as a value statement or a desired characteristic of their management. Yet as we learn about the workings of God, the power of a humble and submissive spirit becomes apparent. In the kingdom of God, greatness begins with humility and submissiveness. These companion virtues are the first critical steps to opening the doors to the blessings of God and the power of the priesthood. It matters not who we are or how lofty our credentials appear. Humility and submissiveness to the Lord, coupled with a grateful heart, are our strength and our hope" (in Conference Report, Oct. 2003, 104; or *Ensign,* Nov. 2003, 98).

Humility is important enough in the eyes of the Lord that He sometimes helps us be humble. Alma 32:8–16 speaks of two ways to become humble. Verse 13 describes those who are "compelled to be humble"; verses 14 and 16 speak of others who humble themselves voluntarily "because of the word."

**Elder Carlos E. Asay** (1926–99) of the Seventy also described these two groups: "Most of us seem to have the 'Nephite cycle' as part of our character. There is a point when we are teachable; our humility enables us to grow and to ride the crest of spirituality. Then there are other times when we begin to feel self-sufficient and puffed up with pride. … How much better it would be if we kept in remembrance our God and our religion and broke the cycle by consistent worship and righteous living. How much better it would be if we were humbled by the word of the Lord and strong enough in spirit to remember our God in whatsoever circumstances we find ourselves" (*Family Pecan Trees: Planting a Legacy of Faith at Home* [1992], 193–94).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual*, 2009, pp. 222–223)

**Doctrine and Covenants 105**

**6** And my people must needs be chastened until they learn obedience, if it must needs be, by the things which they suffer. …

**9** Therefore, in consequence of the transgressions of my people, it is expedient in me that mine elders should wait for a little season for the redemption of Zion—

**10** That they themselves may be prepared, and that my people may be taught more perfectly, and have experience, and know more perfectly concerning their duty, and the things which I require at their hands.

**11** And this cannot be brought to pass until mine elders are endowed with power from on high.

**12** For behold, I have prepared a great endowment and blessing to be poured out upon them, inasmuch as they are faithful and continue in humility before me.

**President Brigham Young**

This is the land of Zion; but we are not yet prepared to go and establish the Center Stake of Zion. The Lord tried this in the first place. He called the people together to the place where the New Jerusalem and the great temple will be built, and where He will prepare for the City of Enoch. And He gave revelation after revelation; but the people could not abide them, and the Church was scattered and peeled, and the people hunted from place to place till, finally, they were driven into the mountains, and here we are. Now, it is for you and me to prepare to return back again; not to our fatherland, in many cases, but to return east, and by-and-by to build up the Center Stake of Zion. We are not prepared to do this now, but we are here to learn until we are of one heart and of one mind in the things of this life. Do all the Latter-day Saints arrive at this? No; they have not, our former experience has proved this. Of the great many who have been baptized into this Church, but few have been able to abide the word of the Lord; they have fallen out on the right and on the left, and have foundered by the way, and a few have gathered together. Will these be prepared to enter the celestial kingdom? Some of them will be, and will become kings and priests; but not all of these, only a portion of them. They do not know what to do with the revelations, commandments, and blessings of God. Talking, for instance, about everyday things, how many do we see here that know what to do with money and property when they get it? Are their eyes single to the building up of the kingdom of God? No; they are single to the building up of themselves. With all the knowledge that Elders have obtained who have traveled in the Church five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, or thirty years, there are few who understand the principles of the kingdom and whose eyes are single to the building of it up in all respects; but their eyes are like the fool's eye—looking to the ends of the earth. They want this and that, and they do not know what to do; they lack wisdom. By-and-by, perhaps, their wealth will depart from them, and when left poor and penniless, they will humble themselves before the Lord that they may be saved. …

Do we know and understand that it is our business to build up Zion? To have seen the way this people have conducted themselves in years past, one would not have had the least idea that such was our business; …

We say we believe Joseph was a prophet, that he had the priesthood and was called of God to gather the people together and establish Zion. If we believe this, why not let our lives prove that we believe the doctrine that we profess?

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 11, Discourse 47, p. 324, Feb. 10, 1867)

**President Ezra Taft Benson**

God will have a humble people. Either we can choose to be humble or we can be compelled to be humble. Alma said, "Blessed are they who humble themselves without being compelled to be humble." (Alma 32:16.) Let us choose to be humble.

We can choose to humble ourselves by conquering enmity toward our brothers and sisters, esteeming them as ourselves, and lifting them as high or higher than we are. (See D&C 38:24; D&C 81:5; D&C 84:106.) We can choose to humble ourselves by receiving counsel and chastisement. (See Jacob 4:10; Hel. 15:3; D&C 63:55; D&C 101:4–5; D&C 108:1; D&C 124:61, 84; D&C 136:31; Prov. 9:8.) We can choose to humble ourselves by forgiving those who have offended us. (See 3 Ne. 13:11, 14; D&C 64:10.) We can choose to humble ourselves by rendering selfless service. (See Mos. 2:16–17.) We can choose to humble ourselves by going on missions and preaching the word that can humble others. (See Alma 4:19 Alma 31:5; Alma 48:20.) We can choose to humble ourselves by getting to the temple more frequently. We can choose to humble ourselves by confessing and forsaking our sins and being born of God. (See D&C 58:43; Mos. 27:25–26; Alma 5:7–14, 49.) We can choose to humble ourselves by loving God, submitting our will to His, and putting Him first in our lives. (See 3 Ne. 11:11; 3 Ne. 13:33; Moro. 10:32.) Let us choose to be humble. We can do it. I know we can.

My dear brethren and sisters, we must prepare to redeem Zion. It was essentially the sin of pride that kept us from establishing Zion in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith. It was the same sin of pride that brought consecration to an end among the Nephites. (See 4 Ne. 1:24–25)

Pride is the great stumbling block to Zion. I repeat: Pride is the great stumbling block to Zion.

We must cleanse the inner vessel by conquering pride. (See Alma 6:2–4; Matt. 23:25–26.)

("Beware of Pride," General Conference, April 1989)

**Doctrine and Covenants 82**

**3** For of him unto whom much is given much is required; and he who sins against the greater light shall receive the greater condemnation.

**4** Ye call upon my name for revelations, and I give them unto you; and inasmuch as ye keep not my sayings, which I give unto you, ye become transgressors; and justice and judgment are the penalty which is affixed unto my law. …

**9** Or, in other words, I give unto you directions how you may act before me, that it may turn to you for your salvation.

**10** I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise.

## Babylon vs. Zion

**Doctrine and Covenants 103**

**9** For they were set to be a light unto the world, and to be the saviors of men;

**10** And inasmuch as they are not the saviors of men, they are as salt that has lost its savor, and is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.

**11** But verily I say unto you, I have decreed that your brethren which have been scattered shall return to the lands of their inheritances, and shall build up the waste places of Zion.

**12** For after much tribulation, as I have said unto you in a former commandment, cometh the blessing.

**13** Behold, this is the blessing which I have promised after your tribulations, and the tribulations of your brethren—your redemption, and the redemption of your brethren, even their restoration to the land of Zion, to be established, no more to be thrown down.

**14** Nevertheless, if they pollute their inheritances they shall be thrown down; for I will not spare them if they pollute their inheritances.

**Matthew 5:13. "If the Salt Have Lost His Savour"**

In addition to its uses in flavoring and preserving food, salt was added to sacrificial offerings under the law of Moses. Thus salt was associated with joy, permanence, and covenant making. When Jesus admonished disciples to be the "salt of the earth" (Matt. 5:13), part of the meaning was that their lives should reflect their covenants with the Lord and serve as a preservative for the world in general. **Elder Carlos E. Asay** (1926–99) of the Presidency of the Seventy explained that salt loses its savor by contamination and that we keep our "savor" by avoiding spiritual contamination. Though directed specifically to priesthood holders, Elder Asay's words have application to each of us:

"A world-renowned chemist told me that salt will not lose its savor with age. Savor is lost through mixture and contamination. Similarly, priesthood power does not dissipate with age; it, too, is lost through mixture and contamination. …" (*Ensign,* May 1980, 42–43).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

**Hugh Nibley**

When we try to mix Zion and Babylon, Babylon has already won the game. Throughout the scriptures, Zion is brought into the clearest focus by placing it against a dark background; and like Zion, that background world is given a code name: Babylon. Babylon, like Zion, is a real society—a type, place, and environment of human existence, described in the scriptures with great clarity and precision. (The word Babylon is not just a general term to indicate anything that is not Zion; it is the designation of a very particular and specific type of society.) Though Babylon is vividly described by the prophets, the best way to define her is as the exact opposite of Zion in all things. Babylon is just as pure in its way as is Zion; it is pure evil—for even good, when it becomes contaminated and perverted, becomes an evil. The main thing is that Babylon and Zion cannot mix in any degree; a Zion that makes concessions is no longer Zion.

There are Two Ways lying before every person in this life, the Way of Light and the Way of Darkness, the Way of Life and the Way of Death; and every mortal every day of his life is required to make a choice between them. Unfortunately for our peace of mind, any compromise between the Two Ways is out of the question, since they lead in opposite directions.

As there is no compromise between the Two Ways, so there is no mixing of Babylon and Zion; God will not tolerate any concessions by Zion: "A scourge and judgment [is] to be poured out upon the children of Zion. For shall the children of the kingdom pollute my holy land?" (D&C 84:58–59).

This, then, is how things stand: (1) We know what Zion is, (2) we know what Babylon is, (3) we know that the two can never mix, and (4) we know that the Latter-day Saints, against the admonitions of their leaders, have always tried to mix them.

(Chapters 1–2, *Approaching Zion*)

**President Brigham Young**

The worst fear that I have about [members of this Church] is that they will get rich in this country, forget God and his people, wax fat, and kick themselves out of the Church and go to hell. This people will stand mobbing, robbing, poverty, and all manner of persecution, and be true.

But my greater fear for them is that they cannot stand wealth; and yet they have to be tried with riches.

(Preston Nibley, *Brigham Young: The Man and His Work* [1936], 128)

**President Brigham Young**

And when the spirit of persecution, the spirit of hatred, of wrath, and malice ceases in the world against this people, it will be the time that this people have apostatized and join hands with the wicked, and never until then; which I pray may never come.

(*Discourses of Brigham Young compiled by John A. Widtsoe,* p. 112)

**Revelation 9:20–21. Modern Idolatry**

As described at the conclusion of Revelation 9, the evil men who are not killed by the war and destruction described in earlier verses will still refuse to repent of their evil practices, including idol worship. While serving as a member of the Seventy, **Elder David R. Stone** taught that a prevalent form of modern idolatry is adopting the tastes and attitudes of the worldly culture that surrounds us:

"Our culture tends to determine what foods we like, how we dress, what constitutes polite behavior, what sports we should follow, what our taste in music should be, the importance of education, and our attitudes toward honesty. It also influences men as to the importance of recreation or religion, influences women about the priority of career or childbearing, and has a powerful effect on how we approach procreation and moral issues. All too often, we are like puppets on a string, as our culture determines what is 'cool.' …

"Seduced by our culture, we often hardly recognize our idolatry, as our strings are pulled by that which is popular in the Babylonian world" ("Zion in the Midst of Babylon," *Ensign* or *Liahona,* May 2006, 91–92).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

**Revelation 18:3, 7–16. The Wealth and Materialism of Babylon**

John used phrases such as "waxed rich" and "lived deliciously" (Rev. 18:3, 7, 9) to highlight the lust for wealth and lavish possessions that define Babylon. These riches will be destroyed, and those who have placed their hearts upon them will lament (see Rev. 18:8–19; 2 Ne. 9:30; D&C 56:16). **President Harold B. Lee** (1899–1973) warned that with prosperity often comes the temptation to embrace the materialism of Babylon: "We are tested, we are tried, we are going through some of the severest tests today and we don't realize perhaps the severity of the tests that we're going through. … Today we are basking in the lap of luxury, the like of which we've never seen before in the history of the world. It would seem that probably this is the most severe test of any test that we've ever had in the history of the Church" ("First Presidency Devotional" [unpublished, Dec. 13, 1973], 4–5; see Jacob 2:18–19).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**47** And while they were yet laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves: And what need hath my lord of this tower?

**48** And consulted for a long time, saying among themselves: What need hath my lord of this tower, seeing this is a time of peace?

**49** Might not this money be given to the exchangers? For there is no need of these things.

**50** And while they were at variance one with another they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord.

## Seek Him Early

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**1** Verily I say unto you, concerning your brethren who have been afflicted, and persecuted, and cast out from the land of their inheritance—

**2** I, the Lord, have suffered the affliction to come upon them, wherewith they have been afflicted, in consequence of their transgressions;

**3** Yet I will own them, and they shall be amine in that day when I shall come to make up my jewels.

**4** Therefore, they must needs be chastened and tried, even as Abraham, who was commanded to offer up his only son.

**5** For all those who will not endure chastening, but deny me, cannot be sanctified.

**6** Behold, I say unto you, there were jarrings, and contentions, and envyings, and strifes, and lustful and covetous desires among them; therefore by these things they polluted their inheritances.

**7** ***They were slow to hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; therefore, the Lord their God is slow to hearken unto their prayers, to answer them in the day of their trouble.***

**8** In the day of their peace they esteemed lightly my counsel; but, in the day of their trouble, of necessity they feel after me.

**9** Verily I say unto you, notwithstanding their sins, my bowels are filled with compassion towards them. I will not utterly cast them off; and in the day of wrath I will remember mercy.

**Mosiah 21**

**1** And it came to pass that Limhi and his people returned to the city of Nephi, and began to dwell in the land again in peace.

**2** And it came to pass that after many days the Lamanites began again to be stirred up in anger against the Nephites, and they began to come into the borders of the land round about.

**3** Now they durst not slay them, because of the oath which their king had made unto Limhi; but they would smite them on their cheeks, and exercise authority over them; and began to put heavy burdens upon their backs, and drive them as they would a dumb ass—

**4** Yea, all this was done that the word of the Lord might be fulfilled.

**5** And now the afflictions of the Nephites were great, and there was no way that they could deliver themselves out of their hands, for the Lamanites had surrounded them on every side.

**6** And it came to pass that the people began to murmur with the king because of their afflictions; and they began to be desirous to go against them to battle. And they did afflict the king sorely with their complaints; therefore he granted unto them that they should do according to their desires.

**7** And they gathered themselves together again, and put on their armor, and went forth against the Lamanites to drive them out of their land.

**8** And it came to pass that the Lamanites did beat them, and drove them back, and slew many of them.

**9** And now there was a great mourning and lamentation among the people of Limhi, the widow mourning for her husband, the son and the daughter mourning for their father, and the brothers for their brethren.

**10** Now there were a great many widows in the land, and they did cry mightily from day to day, for a great fear of the Lamanites had come upon them.

**11** And it came to pass that their continual cries did stir up the remainder of the people of Limhi to anger against the Lamanites; and they went again to battle, but they were driven back again, suffering much loss.

**12** Yea, they went again even the third time, and suffered in the like manner; and those that were not slain returned again to the city of Nephi.

**13** And they did humble themselves even to the dust, subjecting themselves to the yoke of bondage, submitting themselves to be smitten, and to be driven to and fro, and burdened, according to the desires of their enemies.

**14** And they did humble themselves even in the depths of humility; and they did cry mightily to God; yea, even all the day long did they cry unto their God that he would deliver them out of their afflictions.

**15** ***And now the Lord was slow to hear their cry because of their iniquities;*** nevertheless the Lord did hear their cries, and began to soften the hearts of the Lamanites that they began to ease their burdens; yet the Lord did not see fit to deliver them out of bondage.

**Helaman 12**

**1** And thus we can behold how false, and also the unsteadiness of the hearts of the children of men; yea, we can see that the Lord in his great infinite goodness doth bless and prosper those who put their trust in him.

**2** Yea, and we may see at the very time when he doth prosper his people, yea, in the increase of their fields, their flocks and their herds, and in gold, and in silver, and in all manner of precious things of every kind and art; sparing their lives, and delivering them out of the hands of their enemies; softening the hearts of their enemies that they should not declare wars against them; yea, and in fine, doing all things for the welfare and happiness of his people; yea, then is the time that they do harden their hearts, and do forget the Lord their God, and do trample under their feet the Holy One—yea, and this because of their ease, and their exceedingly great prosperity.

**3** And thus we see that except the Lord doth chasten his people with many afflictions, yea, except he doth visit them with death and with terror, and with famine and with all manner of pestilence, they will not remember him.

**4** O how foolish, and how vain, and how evil, and devilish, and how quick to do iniquity, and how slow to do good, are the children of men; yea, how quick to hearken unto the words of the evil one, and to set their hearts upon the vain things of the world!

**5** Yea, how quick to be lifted up in pride; yea, how quick to boast, and do all manner of that which is iniquity; and how slow are they to remember the Lord their God, and to give ear unto his counsels, yea, how slow to walk in wisdom's paths!

**Proverbs 8**

**17** I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

**(2–19) Proverbs 8:17. A Key to Spiritual Power**

This verse expounds one of the simplest and yet most profound truths one can learn in life. Too often God's children wait until times of distress to seek Him, and thus they may deprive themselves of the power and solace they need (compare Helaman 12:1–5; D&C 101:7–8).

(*Old Testament Student Manual* (Third edition, 2003), p. 15)

**D&C 101:6–8. Why Is God Sometimes Slow to Hear His Children?**

One of the great problems recorded in scripture is mankind's indifference to God in times of prosperity. Too often they forget their Creator, who is the giver of all good things. In times of trouble, however, they remember God and turn to Him for mercy and help in their afflictions, but He is slow to help them. These verses show that the Saints were guilty of this offense. Therefore, the Lord did not support them in their day of affliction. He will not support any who claim His promises but do not keep their covenants. (See D&C 84:54–59; Mosiah 11:24; 21:15; Helaman 4:11–13; 12:1–6; Judges 10:13–14; Isaiah 26:16.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 239)

**Helaman 12. A Prophet's Insight**

After Nephi saw that the preaching of the gospel failed to bring the people to repentance, he asked the Lord to send a famine in the land to bring the people to their knees, and it was done according to his words (see Helaman 11:4–6). As people began to die by the thousands, the wicked "began to remember the Lord their God; and they began to remember the words of Nephi" (v. 7). The people pleaded with their chief judges to acknowledge Nephi's authority and to ask him to turn the famine aside. Nephi did so, and the famine abated (see vv. 8–16).

For some seven or eight years the people served the Lord, but it was not long until they were once again engrossed in doing evil. At this point Mormon paused in the historical narrative to insert one of his most powerful prophetic insights into the nature of man and history.

It is important for students of the Book of Mormon to remember that Mormon's work is an abridgment from numerous records he had at his disposal. Mormon was exceedingly selective in what he gave us, as is evidenced by the statement that he did not record "a hundredth part" of all he had access to (see Helaman 3:14). It appears that Mormon selected certain materials because of the particular lessons they conveyed. Lest we miss the impact of the lesson conveyed in the preceding chapters, Mormon drew our attention to it with great care in Helaman 12 by means of phrases such as "thus we see" and "thus we can behold." Note particularly verses 1–3. Clearly Mormon intended that we should not miss his message. Helaman 12 contains one of the greatest summaries of a basic human tendency found anywhere in the scriptures (see also Mosiah 11:24, Judges 10:13–14, Isaiah 1:15).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (Revised, 1996), PDF version, p. 125)

**Helaman 12:3. "Chasten … With Many Afflictions"**

**Elder Neal A. Maxwell** stated: "The Lord has made no secret of the fact that He intends to try the faith and the patience of His Saints. (See Mosiah 23:21.) We mortals are so quick to forget the Lord: 'And thus we see that except the Lord doth chasten his people with many afflictions . . . they will not remember him' (Helaman 12:3).

"However, the Lord knows our bearing capacity, both as to coping and to comprehending, and He will not give us more to bear than we can manage at the moment, though to us it may seem otherwise. (See D&C 50:40; 78:18.) Just as no temptations will come to us from which we cannot escape or which we cannot bear, we will not be given more trials than we can sustain. (See 1 Corinthians 10:13.) …

"President Brigham Young said of a geographical destination, 'This is the place.' Of God's plan of salvation, with its developmental destination, it can be said, 'This is the process'!

"President Young, who knew something about trial and tribulation but also of man's high destiny, said that the Lord lets us pass through these experiences that we might become true friends of God. By developing our individual capacities, wisely exercising our agency, and trusting God—including when we feel forsaken and alone—then we can, said President Young, learn to be 'righteous in the dark.' (*Secretary's Journal,* 28 Jan. 1857.) The gospel glow we see radiating from some—amid dark difficulties— comes from illuminated individuals who are 'of good cheer'!

"To be cheerful when others are in despair, to keep the faith when others falter, to be true even when we feel forsaken—all of these are deeply desired outcomes during the deliberate, divine tutorials which God gives to us—because He loves us. (See Mosiah 3:19.) These learning experiences must not be misread as divine indifference. Instead, such tutorials are a part of the divine unfolding" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1982, p. 97; or *Ensign,* Nov. 1982, p. 67).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (1996), PDF version, pp. 125–126)

**Helaman 12:2. When God Prospers His People, They Forget Him**

**President Ezra Taft Benson** (1899–1994) described the difficulty that can come with prosperity: "Ours then seems to be the toughest test of all for the evils are more subtle, more clever. It all seems less menacing and it is harder to detect. While every test of righteousness represents a struggle, this particular test seems like no test at all, no struggle and so could be the most deceiving of all tests. Do you know what peace and prosperity can do to a people—it can put them to sleep" (Larry E. Dahl,

"Fit for the Kingdom," in *Studies in Scripture, Volume Five: The Gospels,* edited by Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet [1986], 5:369).

**President Harold B. Lee** (1899–1973) compared the test of "luxury" with other tests of life: "We're tested and we're tried. Perhaps we don't realize the severity of the tests we're going through. In the early days of the Church, there were murders committed, there were mobbings. The Saints were driven out into the desert. They were starving, they were unclad, and they were cold. We're the inheritors of what they gave to us. But what are we doing with it? Today we're basking in the lap of luxury, the like of which we've never seen before in the history of the world. It would seem that probably this is the most severe test of any we've ever had in the history of this Church" (Dahl, "Fit for the Kingdom," in *Studies in Scripture,* 5:369).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual,* 2009, p. 278)

**Helaman 12:4. "Set Their Hearts upon the Vain Things of the World!"**

Mormon emphasized the foolishness of those who set their hearts upon the vain or worthless, empty, and valueless things of the world. **Elder Dallin H. Oaks** of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles remarked: "The 'vain things of [the] world' include every combination of that worldly quartet of property, pride, prominence, and power. As to all of these, the scriptures remind us that 'you cannot carry them with you' (Alma 39:14). We should be seeking the kind of treasures the scriptures promise the faithful: 'great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures' (D&C 89:19)" (in Conf. Report, Apr. 2001, 109; or *Ensign,* May 2001, 84).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual,* 2009, p. 278)

**Elder L. Tom Perry**

What was the difference between the people of Alma and the people of King Limhi? Obviously, there were several differences: the people of Alma were peaceful and more righteous; they had already been baptized and entered into a covenant with the Lord; they humbled themselves before the Lord even before their tribulations started. All these differences made it appropriate and fair that the Lord would deliver them quickly in a miraculous way from the hand which kept them in bondage. These scriptures teach us of the Lord's power of deliverance.

("The Power of Deliverance," General Conference, April 2012)

**Mosiah 18–24. Points to Ponder**

Note that the people of King Limhi were still out of tune with the Lord when they were forced to turn to him; therefore, "the Lord was slow to hear their cry because of their iniquities" (Mosiah 21:15). The people of Alma, however, had attuned their lives long before their need arose, and so the Lord could help them directly.

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (Revised ed, 1996), PDF version, p. 75)

**Isaiah 26**

**9** With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early...

**Psalm 63**

**1** O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee...

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

**83** He that seeketh me early shall find me, and shall not be forsaken.

**President Brigham Young**

When I contemplate the effects of keeping the commands of the Lord, and look at the Christian world, I cannot help being struck with the difference of the results which flow from serving God and Satan. I have dwelt, for many years, in the Christian world. I have tried to learn all that they know. But what does it amount to? Nothing. How many chapters, pamphlets, and volumes have been written upon the Holy Ghost, the birth of the Savior, and concerning the being of that God whom we serve? But who knows the truth pertaining to these subjects or to any one of them? Not one. But all who keep the commandments of Jesus have the privilege of gaining a correct understanding of these things. If we draw near to him, he will draw near to us; if we seek him early, we shall find him; if we apply our minds faithfully and diligently, day by day, to know and understand the mind and will of God, it is as easy as, yes, I will say easier than, it is to know the minds of each other, for to know and understand ourselves and our own being is to know and understand God and His being. It is true there is a great deal of speculation in the world; and it becomes more apparent every year; and it will continue so until the people believe in the Gospel of the Son of God, or are given over to infidelity. See the sects and parties springing up here and springing up there, from this and that, and embracing this and the other phantom; or following after this and that dream or fantasy of their imagination. They are dividing and subdividing, and drifting, as fast as time can roll, into infidelity.

Who will know the Son of God? Who will know that Jesus is the Christ? Who, in this our day, can say as Peter did, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." How many will come to this? Very few. How often I have contemplated the condition of the Christian world! I have preached the Gospel to hundreds of thousands of them. Did they believe? If they did, they did not yield obedience. They would contend and argue against the truth, but only one here and another there, or as it is written, "one of a city, and two of a family;" or, to reverse it, one of a family and two of a city, would obey it, and gather with the Saints. Many of those who have gathered, when they have been blessed with a few of the good things of this life, have lifted their heels against Jesus and in opposition to his commands and revelations, and have turned away to fables. I have often asked this question, "Has one-half of those who have obeyed the Gospel and been baptized into the Church ever gathered with the Saints?" No, they have not; and to many who have gathered the Gospel soon became like a dream. They have had their minds opened and seen things correctly; they have had the manifestations of the Spirit of the Lord and have rejoiced in the truth; but by and by, through the lusts of the flesh, they have become sordid, have turned again to the world, and have forgot the Gospel and its blessings.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 13, Discourse 36, p. 310)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country. The people of the Lord, those who have complied with the requirements of the new covenant, have already commenced gathering together to Zion, which is in the state of Missouri; therefore I declare unto you the warning which the Lord has commanded me to declare unto this generation, remembering that the eyes of my Maker are upon me, and that to Him I am accountable for every word I say, wishing nothing worse to my fellowmen than their eternal salvation; therefore, "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come." Repent ye, repent ye, and embrace the everlasting covenant, and flee to Zion, before the overflowing scourge overtake you, for there are those now living upon the earth whose eyes shall not be closed in death until they see all these things, which I have spoken, fulfilled. Remember these things; call upon the Lord while He is near, and seek Him while He may be found, is the exhortation of your unworthy servant.

(Signed) JOSEPH SMITH, JUN.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 17)

# If Ye Are Prepared

## What Is "Faith?"

Before we can begin to unpack the misconceptions around "fear" and the prepared/righteous not fearing, we have to first unpack what "faith" means. Why?

"Fear is the opposite of faith."

Have you heard someone say that before? Of course you have—you might be saying it before this video even starts! "Oh, here is another preparation video designed to ramp up fear which destroys faith because fear is the opposite of faith!"

Ok... So, we now should know why we must first understand what faith is before we can unpack the rest of this topic!

**President Benson,** in his talk "Beware of Pride," taught:

> Therefore, no matter how the world uses [terms], we must understand how God uses [terms] so we can understand the language of holy writ and profit thereby. (See 2 Nephi 4:15; Mosiah 1:3–7; Alma 5:61.)
>
> ("Beware of Pride," General Conference, April 1989)

There will be, of course, worldly definitions, secular definitions, as well as other dogmatic definitions used by the false religions of our day, but in none of them can we "profit thereby." We must understand how the Lord uses the term, for if we don't understand how the Lord uses the term, all of the assumptions/teachings/etc. we glean jumping off from that point will also be incorrect.

**Elder Bednar** lays down a perfect simplified definition of faith, taken directly from **Joseph Smith Jr.,** in his 2008 talk, "Ask in Faith."

> True faith is focused in and on the Lord Jesus Christ and always leads to righteous action. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that "faith [is] the first principle in revealed religion, and the foundation of all righteousness" and that it is also "the principle of action in all intelligent beings" (Lectures on Faith [1985], 1). Action alone is not faith in the Savior, but acting in accordance with correct principles is a central component of faith. Thus, "faith without works is dead" (James 2:20).
>
> The Prophet Joseph further explained that "faith is not only the principle of action, but of power also, in all intelligent beings, whether in heaven or on earth" (Lectures on Faith, 3). Thus, faith in Christ leads to righteous action, which increases our spiritual capacity and power. Understanding that faith is a principle of action and of power inspires us to exercise our moral agency in compliance with gospel truth, invites the redeeming and strengthening powers of the Savior's Atonement into our lives, and enlarges the power within us whereby we are agents unto ourselves (see D&C 58:28).
>
> ("Ask in Faith," General Conference, April 2008)

So what should we have picked up from this?

1. Faith is a principle of action.
2. Faith is a principle of power.

It is a principle of power in that it inspires us, and it is a principle of action in that we exercise our moral agency in compliance with gospel truths. Both together constitute faith; one singularly "is dead, being alone," as James taught us.

**James 2**

> **14** What profit is it, my brethren, for a man to say he hath faith, and hath not works? can faith save him?
>
> **15** Yea, a man may say, I will shew thee I have faith without works; but I say, Shew me thy faith without works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.
>
> **16** For if a brother or sister be naked and destitute, and one of you say, Depart in peace, be warmed and filled; notwithstanding he give not those things which are needful for the body; what profit is your faith unto such?
>
> **17** Even so, faith, if it have not works, is dead, being alone.
>
> **18** Therefore, wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead and cannot save you?

## Fear the Opposite of Faith?

Now that we understand what "faith" means—at least what "faith" means when the Lord uses the term—I ask, do you in your mind have the right definition of "fear"? My observation is that most people, when they think of "faith," use purely a worldly definition of the word, or worse, a dogmatic definition ripped from the church of the devil, and concoct a "feeling," and that "feeling" is faith. Then, when they conjure up a "fear is the opposite of faith!" they simply take the "opposite feeling," and in their mind simply contrast two conjured up feelings when determining what is "faith" and what is "fear." Then, they take that one step further when they falsely assign "of God" and "of the Devil" to these items that elicited said feelings. But I ask, in the Lord's definition of "faith," where does He spell out a "feeling"? Trick question—He doesn't. So what would be the opposite of what we just learned faith is?

1. Faith is a principle of action → a principle of inaction
2. Faith is a principle of power → a principle of inability

If one is saying "fear is the opposite of faith," then this must be their definition of fear, but does that pan out? Is that how the Lord and the people of God use the term "fear" in the scriptures? As a term of inability and inaction?

**Romans 11**

> **20** Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and ***thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:***

**Hebrews 11 (JST)**

> **6** But ***without faith*** it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.
>
> **7** By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, ***moved with fear,*** prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

**Helaman 15**

> **9** And ye know also that they have buried their weapons of war, and ***they fear*** to take them up ***lest by any means they should sin; yea, ye can see that they fear to sin***—for behold they will suffer themselves that they be trodden down and slain by their enemies, and will not lift their swords against them, and this ***because of their faith in Christ.***

**Ether 3**

> **19** And because of the knowledge of this man he could not be kept from beholding within the veil; and he saw the finger of Jesus, which, when he saw, ***he fell with fear;*** for he knew that it was the finger of the Lord; and ***he had faith no longer, for he knew, nothing doubting.***

**Hebrews 12**

**28** Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and ***godly fear:***

As we can clearly identify in these scriptures, the use of the word "fear" here is not used negatively, and what's more, it is used in context as a "motivator." In fact, we learn that "godly fear" is a principle of power, in that it motivated godly men like Noah to exercise their moral agency in compliance with gospel truths and commands from the Lord. That not only isn't the "opposite of faith"; it is literally the definition of an act of faith. So what's happening here with the word "fear"?

## Worldly or Mortal Fear

**Exodus 20**

**20** And Moses said unto the people, ***Fear not:*** for God is come to prove you, and that ***his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 6**

**36** Look unto me in every thought; ***doubt not, fear not.***

**1 John 4**

**17** Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

**18** ***There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 3**

**6** And behold, how oft you have transgressed the commandments and the laws of God, and have gone on in the persuasions of men.

**7** For, behold, ***you should not have feared man more than God.*** Although men set at naught the counsels of God, and despise his words—

**8** Yet you should have been faithful; and he would have extended his arm and supported you against all the fiery darts of the adversary; and he would have been with you in every time of trouble

## Godly Fear: A Second Witness

**David A. Bednar**

### The Fear of the Lord

Different from but related to the fears we often experience is what the scriptures describe as "godly fear" (Hebrews 12:28) or "the fear of the Lord" (Job 28:28; Proverbs 16:6; Isaiah 11:2–3). Unlike worldly fear… godly fear is a source of peace, assurance, and confidence.

But how can anything associated with fear be edifying or spiritually helpful?

The righteous fear I am attempting to describe encompasses a deep feeling of reverence, respect, and awe for the Lord Jesus Christ (see Psalm 33:8; 96:4), obedience to His commandments (see Deuteronomy 5:29; 8:6; 10:12; 13:4; Psalm 112:1), and anticipation of the Final Judgment and justice at His hand. Thus, godly fear grows out of a correct understanding of the divine nature and mission of the Lord Jesus Christ, a willingness to submit our will to His will, and a knowledge that every man and woman will be accountable for his or her own sins in the Day of Judgment (see D&C 101:78; Articles of Faith 1:2).

As the scriptures certify, godly fear "is the beginning of knowledge" (Proverbs 1:7), "the instruction of wisdom" (Proverbs 15:33), a "strong confidence" (Proverbs 14:26), and "a fountain of life" (Proverbs 14:27).

Please note that godly fear is linked inextricably to an understanding of the Final Judgment and our individual accountability for our desires, thoughts, words, and acts (see Mosiah 4:30). … it is the prospect in His presence of facing things as they really are about ourselves and having "a perfect knowledge" (2 Nephi 9:14; see also Alma 11:43) of all our rationalizations, pretenses, and self-deceptions. Ultimately, we will be left without excuse.

Every person who has lived or will yet live upon the earth "shall be brought to stand before the bar of God, to be judged of him according to [his or her] works whether they be good or whether they be evil" (Mosiah 16:10). If our desires have been for righteousness and our works good, then the judgment bar will be pleasing (see Jacob 6:13; Enos 1:27; Moroni 10:34). And at the last day we will "be rewarded unto righteousness" (Alma 41:6).

Conversely, if our desires have been for evil and our works wicked, then the judgment bar will be a cause of dread. "We shall not dare to look up to our God; and we would fain be glad if we could command the rocks and the mountains to fall upon us to hide us from his presence" (Alma 12:14). And at the last day we will "have [our] reward of evil" (Alma 41:5).

As summarized in Ecclesiastes:

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13–14).

My beloved brothers and sisters, ***godly fear dispels mortal fears…***

***Godly fear is loving and trusting in Him. As we fear God more completely, we love Him more perfectly.*** And "perfect love casteth out all fear" (Moroni 8:16). I promise the bright light of godly fear will chase away the dark shadows of mortal fears (see D&C 50:25) as we look to the Savior, build upon Him as our foundation, and press forward on His covenant path with consecrated commitment.

("Therefore They Hushed Their Fears," General Conference, April 2015)

## Righteous Fear vs. Ungodly Fear

**Righteous fear:** Understanding that someday we will stand before the Lord to be judged of our actions, fear of spiritual death, loving our Father in Heaven, being in awe of Him, etc., all of which are "principles of power" that move us towards obedience to God and His commandments and put us at variance with the world.

**Ungodly fear:** Wanting to be popular, wanting to fit in, fear of mortal death, loving the world and its praise, etc., all of which are "principles of power" that move us towards obedience to the world and put us at variance with God and His commandments.

**Matthew 10**

**26** Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

**27** What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.

**28** And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

If you "feel" something as you hear The Word, and that "feeling" makes you upset, so you bury that feeling while attacking the person sharing The Word—it is because you lack "righteous fear," and you are full of "ungodly fear." Period. It is not because you are "righteous" and are "discerning Spirits," etc. It is because the "righteous fear of God" places you in a position where you are begging the rocks to bury you from the Lord's presence, because you are unwilling to change. Period.

The righteous fear and act. The wicked fear and attack.

## Grace After All We Can Do

**Boyd K. Packer**

> The gospel teaches us that relief from torment and guilt can be earned through repentance. Save for those few who defect to perdition after having known a fulness, there is no habit, no addiction, no rebellion, no transgression, no offense exempted from the promise of complete forgiveness.
>
> "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." That is, Isaiah continued, "if ye be willing and obedient" (Isa. 1:18–19).
>
> Even that grace of God promised in the scriptures comes ***only*** "after all we can do" (2 Nephi 25:23).
>
> You may tell yourself that your transgressions are not spiritually illegal. That will not work; neither will rebellion, nor anger, nor joking about them. You cannot do that. And you don't have to do it.
>
> There is a way back. It will not help if, out of tender regard for your feelings, I avoid telling you about the hard part.
>
> ("The Brilliant Morning of Forgiveness," General Conference, October 1995)

**Claudio D. Zivic**

> Undoubtedly, freedom and eternal life are what we seek. We tremble at the very thought of dying and being captives of the devil.
>
> Nephi taught us clearly what we ought to do. He said, "For we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do" (2 Nephi 25:23).
>
> I believe that the first thing we have to keep in mind in doing "all we can" is to repent of our sins. We will never be able to reach our divine potential if we remain in our sins.
>
> ("After All We Can Do," General Conference, October 2007)

**Jorge F. Zeballos**

> Immediately after teaching that "it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength," King Benjamin indicated that 'it is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize' (Mosiah 4:27). God will not require more than the best we can give because that would not be just, but neither can He accept less than that because that would not be just either. Therefore, let us always give the best we can in the service of God and our fellowmen. Let us serve in our families and in our callings in the Church in the best manner possible. Let us do the best we can and each day be a little better.
>
> Salvation and eternal life would not be possible if it were not for the Atonement, brought about by our Savior, to whom we owe everything. But in order for these supreme blessings to be effective in our lives, we should first do our part, "for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do."
>
> ("Attempting the Impossible," General Conference, October 2009)

**Elder Jeffrey R. Holland**

> If you hear The Word and repent, change, and make the steps to become clean then grace will kick in and "ye shall not fear;" if you hear The Word and stay the same, make no changes to become clean, then "the day of grace has passed you." Again I reemphasize President Packer's words, "It will not help if, out of tender regard for your feelings, I avoid telling you about the hard part."
>
> "Come as you are," a loving Father says to each of us, but He adds, "Don't plan to stay as you are."
>
> ("Songs Sung and Unsung," General Conference, April 2017)

If we stay as we are, we don't qualify for grace. Period. And we will fall from "godly righteous fear" into "ungodly fear."

## Promise vs. Uncertainty

**Doctrine and Covenants 82**

> **10** I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ***ye have no promise.***

If you have no promise, what does that mean? That means you are uncertain! It means you can possibly receive something, but you don't know, because you have no promise! What does uncertainty create? What does it feed? Ungodly fear. When we obtain "no promise," we are left in a condition of uncertainty, which feeds our ungodly fear.

**Hebrews 10**

> **35** Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.
>
> **36** For ye have need of patience, that, ***after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.***
>
> **37** For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.
>
> **38** Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.
>
> **39** But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> We have assembled together to do the business of the Lord and it is through the great mercy of our God that we are spared to assemble together, many of us have gone at the command of the Lord in defiance of everything evil, and obtained blessings unspeakable, in consequence of which our names are sealed in the Lamb's book of life, for the Lord has spoken it. It is the privilege of every Elder to speak of the things of God; and could we all come together with one heart and one mind in perfect faith the veil might as well be rent today as next week, or any other time, and if we will but cleanse ourselves and covenant before God, to serve Him, it is our privilege to have an assurance that God will protect us at all times. a—FWR, pp. 13–14. (Oct. 25, 1831.)
>
> ("Parting the Veil Through Perfect Faith," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 8–9)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Until we have perfect love we are liable to fall and when we have a testimony that our names are sealed in the Lamb's book of life we have perfect love and then it is impossible for false Christs to deceive us.
>
> ("Perfect Love a Safeguard Against Falling from Grace," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 9)

We must do all we can to obtain the promise, to obtain an "assurance," and then we will know that God will protect us at all times. If we do not have that promise through obedience, we are liable to fall.

## Temporal vs. Spiritual

**Doctrine and Covenants 29**

> **34** Wherefore, verily I say unto you that all things unto me are spiritual, and not at any time have I given unto you a law which was temporal; neither any man, nor the children of men; neither Adam, your father, whom I created.
>
> **35** Behold, I gave unto him that he should be an agent unto himself; and I gave unto him commandment, but no temporal commandment gave I

> unto him, for my commandments are spiritual; they are not natural nor temporal, neither carnal nor sensual.

**Doctrine and Covenants 64**

> **27** Behold, it is said in my laws, or forbidden, to get in debt to thine enemies;
>
> **28** But behold, it is not said at any time that the Lord should not take when he please, and pay as seemeth him good.

There are tares in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that will attempt to separate commandments from the Lord into two made up categories—"temporal commandments" and "spiritual commandments." Then, they will add weighted value to those things they deem to be "spiritual," saying "these things are 'spiritual' and thus are important, while these others are 'temporal,' and thus are not important to my salvation." This is, simply put, a doctrine of the devil. It is a tare in the church—it finds no place in the doctrine of Christ.

**President Ezra Taft Benson** addressed individuals in the Church who sought to separate commandments from the Lord into two different spheres (temporal and spiritual) in an attempt to self-justify not doing what they deemed to be "temporal (worldly) commandments," based on the grounds that the commandments they put into the "spiritual" sphere were much more important when he said:

> Now Satan is anxious to neutralize the inspired counsel of the Prophet and hence keep the priesthood off-balance, ineffective and inert in the fight for freedom. He does this through diverse means including the use of perverse reasoning.
>
> For example, he will argue, "There is no need to get involved in the fight for freedom—all you need to do is live the gospel." Of course this is a contradiction, because we cannot fully live the gospel and not be involved in the fight for freedom.
>
> We would not say to someone, "There is no need to be baptized—all you need to do is live the gospel." That would be ridiculous because baptism is a part of the gospel.
>
> How would you have reacted if during the War in Heaven someone had said to you, "Look, just do what's right, there is no need to get involved in the fight for free agency." Now it is obvious what the devil is trying to do, but it is sad to see many of us fall for his destructive line.
>
> ("Our Immediate Responsibility," BYU Devotional, October 25, 1966)

We as Latter-day Saints have been commanded for almost 200 years to get out of debt, to live within our means, to be "modest and comely" in our apparel, to garden, to have a food storage, and we have even been commanded to know how to make our own clothes, etc.! It is crucial for us to understand that these are not "temporal commandments"; they are "spiritual commandments dealing with our temporal salvation."

These commandments have been in effect since the Ancient of Days, Father Adam.

**Moses 5**

> **1** And it came to pass that after I, the Lord God, had driven them out, that Adam began to till the earth, and to have dominion over all the beasts of the field, and to eat his bread by the sweat of his brow, as I, the Lord, had commanded him; and Eve also, his wife, did labor with him.

**Helaman 6**

> **12** They did raise grain in abundance, both in the north and in the south; and they did flourish exceedingly, both in the north and in the south. And they did multiply and wax exceedingly strong in the land. And they did raise many flocks and herds, yea, many fatlings.
>
> **13** Behold their women did toil and spin, and did make all manner of cloth, of fine-twined linen and cloth of every kind, to clothe their nakedness. And thus the sixty and fourth year did pass away in peace.

Those who do ***all*** that they can to keep ***all*** of the Lord's commandments have the promise from the Lord that, despite unforeseen problems that may or may not come, He will take care of them. Because of that relationship, the righteous, the prepared, do not fear. However, those who do not do ***all*** they can to keep ***all*** of the commandments receive no such promise.

Likewise, those who say, "I just need to keep the commandments and the Lord will provide me manna; I don't need to worry about a food storage," or "I just need to keep the commandments and the Lord will take away all my worldly debt!" are saying, "I don't need to be baptized; I just need to live the gospel of Jesus Christ!" The problem is that we cannot claim to be living the gospel of Jesus Christ, we cannot claim to be living the commandments, etc., while completely ignoring our temporal salvation, for our temporal salvation is synonymous with our spiritual salvation.

Those who have Godly fear act by doing all they can to keep all the Lord's commandments. Those who have worldly fear self-justify away the need to even attempt to obey certain commandments by rationalizing away the importance of those commandments based off of arbitrary and false definitions of "temporal vs. spiritual" commandments. Those who have done all they can rest safely, knowing that grace will then apply, and that if the Lord has to, He will rain manna down from heaven upon them in their time of need, while those who have done nothing have no promise, and thus live in a perpetual state of worldly fear because they have no such assurance or promise.

## Obey the Keys

**Doctrine and Covenants 1**

> **11** Wherefore the voice of the Lord is unto the ends of the earth, that all that will hear may hear:
>
> **12** Prepare ye, prepare ye for that which is to come, for the Lord is nigh;
>
> **13** And the anger of the Lord is kindled, and his sword is bathed in heaven, and it shall fall upon the inhabitants of the earth.
>
> **14** And the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, shall be cut off from among the people;
>
> **15** For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant;
>
> **16** They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.

**Marion G. Romney**

> This statement is worth emphasizing. "He that receiveth my servants receiveth me" [D&C 84:36]. Who are his servants? They are his representatives in the offices of the Priesthood—the General, Stake, Priesthood Quorum, and Ward officers. It behooves us to keep this in mind when we are tempted to disregard our presiding authorities, bishops, quorum and stake presidents, etc., when, within the jurisdiction of their callings, they give us counsel and advice.
>
> (In Conference Report, Oct. 1960, p. 73)

**Elder Orson Pratt**

> Rebellion in families is as sinful as rebellion against the authorities ordained in the church; and a wife will lose the spirit of God in refusing to obey the counsel of her husband, just the same as members of the church would in rebelling against the counsels imparted to them by the priesthood.
>
> (*The Seer* [1854], pp. 96–97)

**Bishop Glenn L. Pace**

> Inappropriate intellectualism sometimes leads one to testify that he knows the gospel is true but believes the Brethren are just a little out of touch. Out of touch with what? Don't confuse a decision to abstain from participating in a trend with a lack of awareness about its existence. These Brethren "prove all things" and "hold fast that which is good." (1 Thes. 5:21). To accomplish this, they are in constant touch with Him who created this earth and knows the world from beginning to end.
>
> There are some of our members who practice selective obedience. A prophet is not one who displays a smorgasbord of truth from which we are free to pick and choose. However, some members become critical and suggest the prophet should change the menu. A prophet doesn't take a poll to see which way the wind of public opinion is blowing. He reveals the will of the Lord to us. The world is full of deteriorating churches who have succumbed to public opinion and have become more dedicated to tickling the ears of their members than obeying the laws of God.
>
> ("Follow the Prophet," General Conference, April 1989)

**President Henry B. Eyring**

> It is hard to keep the Lord's commandments without faith and trust in Him. As some lose their faith in the Savior, they may even attack His counsel, calling good evil and evil good. To avoid this tragic error, it is crucial that any personal revelation we receive be consonant with the teachings of the Lord and His prophets.
>
> ("The Faith to Ask and Then to Act," October 2021)

**D&C 90:36–37. "The Lord Will Chasten Zion until She Overcomes"**

> **Elder Melvin J. Ballard** said of the Lord's promise to see that Zion overcomes and is clean: "That kind of promise entails the necessity of chastisement, when we need to be chastened and corrected and brought to a condition of repentance. I recognize that the Lord cannot fulfil his work nor accomplish his purposes without our willing obedience. He will not use this people unless we are willing to be used; but he has means of correcting, he has means of chastisement, which he will apply from time to time, and the only thing that impedes our progress today is our own lack of willingness to follow the counsel of those whom God has appointed to lead this people, because of the imagination of our hearts that we are wiser than they are." (In Conference Report, Oct. 1921, p. 100.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), pp. 214–215)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Do Not Betray the Brethren
>
> O ye Twelve! and all Saints! profit by this important Key—that in all your trials, troubles, temptations, afflictions, bonds, imprisonments and death, see to it, that you do not betray heaven; that you do not betray Jesus Christ; that you do not betray the brethren; that you do not betray the revelations of God, whether in Bible, Book of Mormon, or Doctrine and Covenants, or any other that ever was or ever will be given and revealed unto man in this world or that which is to come. Yea, in all your kicking and flounderings, see to it that you do not this thing, lest innocent blood be found upon your skirts, and you go down to hell. All other sins are not to be compared to sinning against the Holy Ghost, and proving a traitor to the brethren.
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 156)

**Henry B. Eyring**

> Another fallacy is to believe that the choice to accept or not accept the counsel of prophets is no more than deciding whether to accept good advice and gain its benefits or to stay where we are. But the choice not to take prophetic counsel changes the very ground upon which we stand. It becomes more dangerous. The failure to take prophetic counsel lessens our power to take inspired counsel in the future. The best time to have decided to help Noah build the ark was the first time he asked. Each time he asked after that, each failure to respond would have lessened sensitivity to the Spirit. And so each time his request would have seemed more foolish, until the rain came. And then it was too late.
>
> ("Finding Safety in Counsel," General Conference, April 1997)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> For me as the giver, I have a duty toward your success. Should you fail, in a measure I have failed. So I must teach and train adequately to ensure your personal safety and, at the same time, safeguard precious property you are to use.
>
> For you as the receiver, obligations accompany the keys. You must know applicable laws and obey them. Loyalty is expected. And you should understand the power of your instrument. Obedience, loyalty, and understanding are implicit with your acceptance of those keys.
>
> Now apply the same principles to keys of the priesthood. Your stake president, quorum president, and bishop hold keys of presidency. Their keys control the power of their unit of the Church. Those leaders not only may call and release, but they must train and bear sacred responsibility that the mission of the Church be accomplished.
>
> They who *receive* ordinations or callings have obligations of obedience, loyalty, and understanding.
>
> ***Obedience to law first and foremost means keeping the commandments of God. By so doing, one becomes worthy to receive personal revelation!*** Those who receive the Melchizedek Priesthood are under solemn oath and covenant to "live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God" (D&C 84:44).
>
> *Loyalty* is vital. Loyalty to him who has keys to call and to release you, even though he is an imperfect human being, will develop unity essential to success (see D&C 124:45–46). The Lord defined this reality when he said, 'Israel shall be saved in mine own due time; and by the keys which I have given shall they be led' (D&C 35:25).
>
> ("Keys of the Priesthood," General Conference, October 1987)

**President Dallin H. Oaks**

> First, in its fulness the personal line does not function independent of the priesthood line. The gift of the Holy Ghost—the means of communication from God to man—is conferred by priesthood authority as authorized by those holding priesthood keys. It does not come merely by desire or belief. And the right to the continuous companionship of this Spirit needs to be affirmed each Sabbath as we worthily partake of the sacrament and renew our baptismal covenants of obedience and service.
>
> ***Similarly, we cannot communicate reliably through the direct, personal line if we are disobedient to or out of harmony with the priesthood line.*** The Lord has declared that "the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness" (D&C 121:36). Unfortunately, it is common for persons who are violating God's commandments or disobedient to the counsel of their priesthood leaders to declare that God has revealed to them that they are excused from obeying some commandment or from following some counsel. ***Such persons may be receiving revelation or inspiration, but it is not from the source they suppose.*** The devil is the father of lies, and he is ever anxious to frustrate the work of God by his clever imitations.
>
> ("Two Lines of Communication," General Conference, October 2010)

There are tares in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that will attempt to separate commandments from the Lord into two made up categories—"counsel/urgings/pleadings/etc. from the keys" and "keeping their covenants with the Lord." Just as we went over above,

this is, simply put, a doctrine of the devil. It is a tare. One cannot be at odds with the keys and be keeping their covenants with the Lord. Period. If one is at odds with the keys and is making no attempt to repent and do all they can to be obedient to the keys, they likewise receive no such promise or assurance from the Lord.

## Agency vs. Consequence

**Doctrine and Covenants 97**

> *22–28, Zion will escape the Lord's scourge if she is faithful.*
>
> **22** For behold, and lo, vengeance cometh speedily upon the ungodly as the whirlwind; and who shall escape it?
>
> **23** The Lord's scourge shall pass over by night and by day, and the report thereof shall vex all people; yea, it shall not be stayed until the Lord come;
>
> **24** For the indignation of the Lord is kindled against their abominations and all their wicked works.
>
> **25** Nevertheless, Zion shall escape if she observe to do all things whatsoever I have commanded her.
>
> **26** But if she observe not to do whatsoever I have commanded her, I will visit her according to all her works, with sore affliction, with pestilence, with plague, with sword, with vengeance, with devouring fire.
>
> **27** Nevertheless, let it be read this once to her ears, that I, the Lord, have accepted of her offering; and if she sin no more none of these things shall come upon her;
>
> **28** And I will bless her with blessings, and multiply a multiplicity of blessings upon her, and upon her generations forever and ever, saith the Lord your God. Amen.

**Doctrine and Covenants 58**

> **29** [They who] doeth not anything until [they are] commanded, [they who] receiveth commandments with a doubtful heart, and keepeth [them] with slothfulness, the same [are] damned.
>
> **30** Who am I that made man, saith the Lord, that will hold him guiltless that obeys not my commandments?
>
> **31** Who am I, saith the Lord, that have promised and have not fulfilled?
>
> **32** I command and men obey not; I revoke and they receive not the blessing.
>
> **33** Then they say in their hearts: This is not the work of the Lord, for his promises are not fulfilled. But wo unto such, for their reward lurketh beneath, and not from above.

Such individuals, when they find that help is not sent from heaven, will deny the faith and blame it on the Lord, claiming He has not fulfilled His promises. The Lord warns such individuals that "your reward lurketh beneath, and not from above." Their reward will not be manna from heaven or a rapture up into heaven—it will be something coming from beneath.

## How Zion May Escape the Lord's Scourge

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

> This way of escape, insuring the protection of the Lord, is a very simple one. Unfortunately, many of the people of Zion have refused to take advantage of this promise. As I observe conditions among the people I cannot see how we are going to escape when the judgments are to pass over the nations, which are promised in this revelation and in others which I cannot take time to read. Because of our disobedience and our failure to keep the commandments of the Lord, the righteous, as in times past, may be called upon to suffer with the unrighteous among us.
>
> (*Doctrines of Salvation,* Volume 3, pp.31–32)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> Agency, or the power to choose, was ours as spirit children of our Creator before the world was. (See Alma 13:3; Moses 4:4.) It is a gift from God, nearly as precious as life itself.
>
> Often, however, agency is misunderstood. While we are free to choose, once we have made those choices, we are tied to the consequences of those choices.
>
> ("Addiction or Freedom," General Conference, October 1988)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> Only a man who has paid the price for priesthood power will be able to bring miracles to those he loves and keep his marriage and family safe, now and throughout eternity.
>
> ("The Price of Priesthood Power," General Conference, April 2016)

**President Russell M. Nelson** more recently said,

> The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do (see Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7 (The Wheat and the Tares)).
>
> ("The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior's Second Coming," *Ensign,* April 2020)

We can choose whatever we want; we do not get to choose the consequences. Only those who have done all they can do will qualify for grace. Only those who have paid the price will qualify for that power. We obtain that power through obedience—obedience to the keys and to every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God. Those that qualify will "fear not," while those who do not will tremble and buckle with fear.

**D&C 88:91. "Men's Hearts Shall Fail Them; for Fear Shall Come upon All People"**

> In a previous revelation the Lord said, "If ye are prepared ye shall not fear" (D&C 38:30). The people of the world will not be prepared when the Lord pours out His judgments. Sin will abound as in the days of Noah, and people will be left without excuse because they did not heed the warning to repent. Knowing that the judgments are just and that they have no excuse and no escape, the people of the world will greatly fear.
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 202)

**Enrichment B: Establishing Zion**

> The scriptures testify that in the days prior to the Second Coming of the Savior the world will be torn with war, upheaval, natural calamities, judgments, and turmoil. So great will be the turbulence of these times that people's hearts will fail them. (See D&C 45:26.)
>
> Have you been tempted, when you have read of the devastations to come, to wish that you will not live to see them? If so, then you understand only one aspect of the prophetic promises. Again and again the Lord has made promises that should give you faith and hope [if you are faithful].
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 371)

## Much Given, Much Expected

**Doctrine and Covenants 82**

> **3** For of him unto whom much is given much is required; and he who sins against the greater light shall receive the greater condemnation.
>
> **4** Ye call upon my name for revelations, and I give them unto you; and inasmuch as ye keep not my sayings, which I give unto you, ye become

transgressors; and justice and judgment are the penalty which is affixed unto my law.

**Doctrine and Covenants 63**

**60** Behold, I am Alpha and Omega, even Jesus Christ.

**61** Wherefore, let all men beware how they take my name in their lips—

**62** For behold, verily I say, that many there be who are under this condemnation, who use the name of the Lord, and use it in vain, having not authority.

**63** Wherefore, let the church repent of their sins, and I, the Lord, will own them; otherwise they shall be cut off.

**64** Remember that that which cometh from above is sacred, and must be spoken with care, and by constraint of the Spirit; and in this there is no condemnation, and ye receive the Spirit through prayer; wherefore, without this there remaineth condemnation. ...

**66** These things remain to overcome through patience, that such may receive a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, otherwise, a greater condemnation. Amen.

**Luke 12**

**48** Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or unto all?

**49** And the Lord said, I speak unto those whom the Lord shall make rulers over his household, to give his children their portion of meat in due season.

**50** And they said, Who then is that faithful and wise servant?

**51** And the Lord said unto them, It is that servant who watcheth, to impart his portion of meat in due season.

**52** Blessed be that servant whom his Lord shall find, when he cometh, so doing.

**53** Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

**54** But the evil servant is he who is not found watching. And if that servant is not found watching, he will say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and the maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken.

**55** The Lord of that servant will come in a day he looketh not for, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him down, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

**56** And that servant who knew his Lord's will and prepared not for his Lord's coming, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

**57** But he that knew not his Lord's will, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom the Lord has committed much, of him will men ask the more.

**3 Nephi 26**

**8** And these things have I written, which are a lesser part of the things which he taught the people; and I have written them to the intent that they may be brought again unto this people, from the Gentiles, according to the words which Jesus hath spoken.

**9** And when they shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things then shall the greater things be made manifest unto them.

**10** And if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation.

**11** Behold, I was about to write them, all which were engraven upon the plates of Nephi, but the Lord forbade it, saying: I will try the faith of my people.

**President Russell M. Nelson**

You may wish to ponder important questions such as, "How would my life be different if my knowledge gained from the Book of Mormon were suddenly taken away?"

("Closing Remarks," General Conference, October 2019)

**2 Nephi 28**

**20** For behold, at that day shall he rage in the hearts of the children of men, and stir them up to anger against that which is good.

**21** And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell.

**22** And behold, others he flattereth away, and telleth them there is no hell; and he saith unto them: I am no devil, for there is none—and thus he whispereth in their ears, until he grasps them with his awful chains, from whence there is no deliverance.

**23** Yea, they are grasped with death, and hell; and death, and hell, and the devil, and all that have been seized therewith must stand before the throne of God, and be judged according to their works, from whence they must go into the place prepared for them, even a lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment.

**24** Therefore, wo be unto him that is at ease in Zion!

**25** Wo be unto him that crieth: All is well!

**26** Yea, wo be unto him that hearkeneth unto the precepts of men, and denieth the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost!

**27** Yea, wo be unto him that saith: We have received, and we need no more!

**28** And in fine, wo unto all those who tremble, and are angry because of the truth of God! For behold, he that is built upon the rock receiveth it with gladness; and he that is built upon a sandy foundation trembleth lest he shall fall.

**29** Wo be unto him that shall say: We have received the word of God, and we need no more of the word of God, for we have enough!

**30** For behold, thus saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have.

**31** Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm, or shall hearken unto the precepts of men, save their precepts shall be given by the power of the Holy Ghost.

## He Who Will Not Receive Light Shall Lose Light

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

"And the disciples came and said unto Him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? [I would here remark, that the 'them' made use of in this interrogation, is a personal pronoun, and refers to the multitude.] He answered and said unto them, [that is unto the disciples] because it is given unto you, to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them, [that is, unbelievers] it is not given; for whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath."

We understand from this saying, that those who had been previously looking for a Messiah to come, according to the testimony of the prophets, and were then, at that time looking for a Messiah, but had not sufficient light, on account of their unbelief, to discern Him to be their Savior; and He being the true Messiah, consequently they must be disappointed, and lose even all the knowledge, or have taken away from them all the light, understanding, and faith which they had upon this

subject; therefore he that will not receive the greater light, must have taken away from him all the light which he hath; and if the light which is in you become darkness, behold, how great is that darkness! "Therefore," says the Savior, "speak I unto them in parables because they, seeing, see not, and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand; and in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive."

Now we discover that the very reason assigned by this prophet, why they would not receive the Messiah, was, because they did not or would not understand; and seeing, they did not perceive; "for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." But what saith He to His disciples? "Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 94–95)

## Darkness the Condemnation of the World

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

We again make remark here—for we find that the very principle upon which the disciples were accounted blessed, was because they were permitted to see with their eyes and hear with their ears—that the condemnation which rested upon the multitude that received not His saying, was because they were not willing to see with their eyes, and hear with their ears; not because they could not, and were not privileged to see and hear, but because their hearts were full of iniquity and abominations; "as your fathers did, so do ye." The prophet, foreseeing that they would thus harden their hearts, plainly declared it; and herein is the condemnation of the world; that light hath come into the world, and men choose darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. This is so plainly taught by the Savior, that a wayfaring man need not mistake it.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 95–96)

**President Ezra Taft Benson**

Once we realize how the Lord feels about [The Book of Mormon], it should not surprise us that He also gives us solemn warnings about how we receive it. After indicating that those who receive the Book of Mormon with faith, working righteousness, will receive a crown of eternal glory (D&C 20:14), the Lord follows with this warning: "But those who harden their hearts in unbelief, and reject it, it shall turn to their own condemnation" (D&C 20:15).

In 1829, the Lord warned the Saints that they are not to trifle with sacred things (see D&C 6:12). Surely the Book of Mormon is a sacred thing, and yet many trifle with it, or in other words, take it lightly, treat it as though it is of little importance.

In 1832, as some early missionaries returned from their fields of labor, the Lord reproved them for treating the Book of Mormon lightly. As a result of that attitude, he said, their minds had been darkened. Not only had treating this sacred book lightly brought a loss of light to themselves, it had also brought the whole Church under condemnation, even all the children of Zion. And then the Lord said, "And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon" (D&C 84:54–57).

Has the fact that we have had the Book of Mormon with us for over a century and a half made it seem less significant to us today? Do we remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon? In the Bible we have the Old Testament and the New Testament. The word testament is the English rendering of a Greek word that can also be translated as covenant. Is this what the Lord meant when He called the Book of Mormon the 'new covenant'? It is indeed another testament or witness of Jesus. This is one of the reasons why we have recently added the words "Another Testament of Jesus Christ" to the title of the Book of Mormon.

If the early Saints were rebuked for treating the Book of Mormon lightly, are we under any less condemnation if we do the same? The Lord Himself bears testimony that it is of eternal significance. Can a small number of us bring the whole Church under condemnation because we trifle with sacred things? What will we say at the Judgment when we stand before Him and meet His probing gaze if we are among those described as forgetting the new covenant? …

Over ten years ago I made the following statement regarding the Book of Mormon:

"Do eternal consequences rest upon our response to this book? Yes, either to our blessing or our condemnation.

"Every Latter-day Saint should make the study of this book a lifetime pursuit. Otherwise he is placing his soul in jeopardy and neglecting that which could give spiritual and intellectual unity to his whole life. There is a difference between a convert who is built on the rock of Christ through the Book of Mormon and stays hold of that iron rod, and one who is not" (Ensign, May 1975, p. 65).

I reaffirm those words to you this day. Let us not remain under condemnation, with its scourge and judgment, by treating lightly this great and marvelous gift the Lord has given to us. Rather, let us win the promises associated with treasuring it up in our hearts.

In the Doctrine and Covenants, section 84, verses 54 to 58, we read:

"And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—

"Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation.

"And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all.

"And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written—

"That they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom; otherwise there remaineth a scourge and judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion" (D&C 84:54–58).

("The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion," General Conference, October 1986)

## But I've Heard…

There will be those who say they have heard something different than this being taught. To those individuals I quote **President Ezra Taft Benson:**

Sometimes from behind the pulpit, in our classrooms, in our Council meetings and in our church publications we hear, read or witness things that do not square with the truth… Now do not let this serve as an excuse for your own wrong-doing. The Lord is letting the wheat and the tares mature before he fully purges the Church. He is also testing you to see if you will be misled. The devil is trying to deceive the very elect.

("Our Immediate Responsibility," BYU Devotional, October 25, 1966)

**D&C 45**

**56** And at that day, when I shall come in my glory, shall the parable be fulfilled which I spake concerning the ten virgins.

**57** For they that are wise and have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived—verily I say unto you, they shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day.

As I said clearly at the start of this chapter, there is a difference between identifying when leaders do or say incorrect things and choosing to not follow the counsel of the keys. President Ezra Taft Benson was not telling members that it's okay to ignore the keys when they tell you to act. He is, however, saying that there are tares in the church and that they are teaching incorrect doctrine, but that will not be a sufficient excuse for you if you heed it. My mission president always used to say, "we are called into positions in this life to either exalt us or condemn us." We are the ones to make this decision, not the Lord.

**President Ezra Taft Benson** in the same talk said essentially the same thing:

As members of the Church we have some close quarters to pass through if we are to save our souls. As the Church gets larger some men have increasing responsibility and more and more duties must be delegated. We all have stewardships for which we must account to the Lord.

Unfortunately some men who do not honor their stewardships may have an adverse affect on many people. Often the greater the man's responsibility the more good or evil he can accomplish. The Lord usually gives a man a long enough rope and sufficient time to determine whether that man wants to pull himself into the presence of God or drop off somewhere below.

There are some regrettable things being said and done by some people in the Church today. As President Clark so well warned, "The ravening wolves are amongst us, from our own membership and they, more than any others, are clothed in sheep's clothing because they wear the habiliments of the priesthood.... We should be careful of them."

("Our Immediate Responsibility," BYU Devotional, October 25, 1966)

## Stand Independent Above All Other Creatures

**Stand Independent Above All Other Creatures**

By Elder Bruce R. McConkie
Of the Council of the Twelve

General Conference • April 1979

I stand before the Church this day and raise the warning voice. It is a prophetic voice, for I shall say only what the apostles and prophets have spoken concerning our day.

It is the voice of Jesus on the Mount of Olives, of John on the Isle of Patmos, of Joseph Smith during the mobbings and murders of Missouri. It is a voice calling upon the Lord's people to prepare for the troubles and desolations which are about to be poured out upon the world without measure.

For the moment we live in a day of peace and prosperity but it shall not ever be thus. Great trials lie ahead. All of the sorrows and perils of the past are but a foretaste of what is yet to be. And we must prepare ourselves temporally and spiritually.

Our spiritual preparation consists in keeping the commandments of God, and taking the Holy Spirit for our guide, so that when this life is over we shall find rest and peace in paradise and an ultimate inheritance of glory and honor in the celestial kingdom.

Our temporal preparation consists in using the good earth in the way the Lord designed and intended so as to supply all our just wants and needs. It is his purpose to provide for his Saints for all things are his, but, he says, it must needs be done in his own way. (See D&C 104:14–18.)

There is a common axiom among us which states: A religion that cannot save a man temporally does not have power to save him spiritually. If we cannot care for our temporal needs in this world, how can we ever succeed in spiritual things in the world to come?

Thus, speaking of temporal things—of lands and houses and crops, of work and sweat and toil, of the man Adam eating his bread in the sweat of his face (see Gen. 3:19)—the Lord says: "If you will that I give unto you a place in the celestial world, you must prepare yourselves by doing the things which I have commanded you and required of you" (D&C 78:7).

Then he commands both the Church and its members "to prepare and organize" their temporal affairs according to the law of his gospel, "that through my providence," saith the Lord, "notwithstanding the tribulation which shall descend upon you, that the church may stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world;

"That you may come up unto the crown prepared for you, and be made rulers over many kingdoms, saith the Lord God" (D&C 78:11, 14–15).

The Church, which administers the gospel, and the Saints who have received the gospel, must be independent of all the powers of earth, as they work out their salvation—temporally and spiritually—with fear and trembling before the Lord!

Be it remembered that tribulations lie ahead. There will be wars in one nation and kingdom after another until war is poured out upon all nations and two hundred million men of war mass their armaments at Armageddon.

Peace has been taken from the earth, the angels of destruction have begun their work, and their swords shall not be sheathed until the Prince of Peace comes to destroy the wicked and usher in the great Millennium.

There will be earthquakes and floods and famines. The waves of the sea shall heave themselves beyond their bounds, the clouds shall withhold their rain, and the crops of the earth shall wither and die.

There will be plagues and pestilence and disease and death. An overflowing scourge shall cover the earth and a desolating sickness shall sweep the land. Flies shall take hold of the inhabitants of the earth, and maggots shall come in upon them. (See D&C 29:14–20.) "Their flesh shall fall from off their bones, and their eyes from their sockets" (D&C 29:19).

Bands of Gadianton robbers will infest every nation, immorality and murder and crime will increase, and it will seem as though every man's hand is against his brother.

We need not dwell more upon these things. We are commanded to search the scriptures where they are recounted with force and fervor, and they shall surely come to pass.

It is one of the sad heresies of our time that peace will be gained by weary diplomats as they prepare treaties of compromise, or that the Millennium will be ushered in because men will learn to live in peace and to keep the commandments, or that the predicted plagues and promised desolations of latter days can in some way be avoided.

We must do all we can to proclaim peace, to avoid war, to heal disease, to prepare for natural disasters—but with it all, that which is to be shall be.

Knowing what we know, and having the light and understanding that has come to us, we must—as individuals and as a Church—use our talents, strengths, energies, abilities, and means to prepare for whatever may befall us and our children.

We know that the world will go on in wickedness until the end of the world, which is the destruction of the wicked. We shall continue to live

in the world, but with the Lord's help we shall not be of the world. We shall strive to overcome carnality and worldliness of every sort and shall invite all men to flee from Babylon, join with us, and live as becometh Saints.

As the Saints of the Most High we shall strive to "stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world" (D&C 78:14). Our only hope is to free ourselves from the bondage of sin, to rid ourselves from the chains of darkness, to rise above the world, to live godly and upright lives.

Relying always on the Lord, we must become independent of the world. We must be self-reliant. Using the agency God has given us, we must work out our own economic and temporal problems.

We are here on earth to work—to work long, hard, arduous hours, to work until our backs ache and our tired muscles knot, to work all our days. This mortal probation is one in which we are to eat our bread in the sweat of our faces until we return to the dust from whence we came.

Work is the law of life; it is the ruling principle in the lives of the Saints. We cannot, while physically able, voluntarily shift the burden of our own support to others. Doles abound in evils. Industry, thrift, and self-respect are essential to salvation.

We must maintain our own health, sow our own gardens, store our own food, educate and train ourselves to handle the daily affairs of life. No one else can work out our salvation for us, either temporally or spiritually.

We are here on earth to care for the needs of our family members. Wives have claim on their husbands for their support, children upon their parents, parents upon their children, brothers upon each other, and relatives upon their kin.

It is the aim of the Church to help the Saints to care for themselves and, where need be, to make food and clothing and other necessities available, lest the Saints turn to the doles and evils of Babylon. To help care for the poor among them the Church must operate farms, grow vineyards, run dairies, manage factories, and ten thousand other things—all in such a way as to be independent of the powers of evil in the world.

We do not know when the calamities and troubles of the last days will fall upon any of us as individuals or upon bodies of the Saints. The Lord deliberately withholds from us the day and hour of his coming and of the tribulations which shall precede it—all as part of the testing and probationary experiences of mortality. He simply tells us to watch and be ready.

We can rest assured that if we have done all in our power to prepare for whatever lies ahead, he will then help us with whatever else we need.

He rained manna from heaven upon all Israel, six days each week for forty years, lest they perish for want of bread, but the manna ceased on the morrow after they ate of the parched corn of Canaan. Then they were required to supply their own food. (See Ex. 16:3–4, 35.)

During forty years in the wilderness the clothes worn by all Israel waxed not old and their shoes wore not out, but when they entered their promised land, then the Lord required them to provide their own wearing apparel. (See Deut. 29:5.)

When there was a famine in the land, at Elijah's word, a certain barrel of meal did not waste, and a certain cruse of oil did not fail, until the Lord sent again rain on the earth. And it is worthy of note, as Jesus said, that though there were many widows in Israel, unto one only was Elijah sent. (See 1 Kgs. 17:10–16.)

We do not say that all of the Saints will be spared and saved from the coming day of desolation. But we do say there is no promise of safety and no promise of security except for those who love the Lord and who are seeking to do all that he commands.

It may be, for instance, that nothing except the power of faith and the authority of the priesthood can save individuals and congregations from the atomic holocausts that surely shall be.

And so we raise the warning voice and say: Take heed; prepare; watch and be ready. There is no security in any course except the course of obedience and conformity and righteousness.

For thus saith the Lord: "The Lord's scourge shall pass over by night and by day, and the report thereof shall vex all people; yea, it shall not be stayed until the Lord come; …

"Nevertheless, Zion shall escape if she observe to do all things whatsoever I have commanded her," saith the Lord.

"But if she observe not to do whatsoever I have commanded her, I will visit her according to all her works, with sore affliction, with pestilence, with plague, with sword, with vengeance, with devouring fire." (D&C 97:23, 25–26.)

O God, our Father, wilt thou grant us peace and security and safety in the days of tribulation that shall come like a whirlwind upon all the earth.

Wilt thou hedge up the evil powers, and open up the way before us, thy people, that as individuals and as a Church we may stand independent of every creature beneath the celestial world.

And wilt thou enfold us everlastingly in the arms of thy love; and finally, wilt thou save us with an everlasting salvation in thy kingdom—for all of which we pray.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

("Stand Independent Above All Other Creatures," General Conference, April 1979)

# New Jerusalem, Zion, City of Holiness

## The First Zion

**Articles of Faith**

> **10** We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.

Before we can learn about the New Jerusalem, which is to be built, let us learn about the first such city that we know of being built.

**Moses 7**

> **1** And it came to pass that Enoch continued his speech, saying: Behold, our father Adam taught these things, and many have believed and become the sons of God, and many have believed not, and have perished in their sins, and are looking forth with fear, in torment, for the fiery indignation of the wrath of God to be poured out upon them.
>
> **2** And from that time forth Enoch began to prophesy, saying unto the people, that: As I was journeying, and stood upon the place Mahujah, and cried unto the Lord, there came a voice out of heaven, saying—Turn ye, and get ye upon the mount Simeon.
>
> **3** And it came to pass that I turned and went up on the mount; and as I stood upon the mount, I beheld the heavens open, and I was clothed upon with glory;
>
> **4** And I saw the Lord; and he stood before my face, and he talked with me, even as a man talketh one with another, face to face; and he said unto me: Look, and I will show unto thee the world for the space of many generations. ...
>
> **16** And from that time forth there were wars and bloodshed among them; but the Lord came and dwelt with his people, and they dwelt in righteousness.
>
> **17** The fear of the Lord was upon all nations, so great was the glory of the Lord, which was upon his people. And the Lord blessed the land, and they were blessed upon the mountains, and upon the high places, and did flourish.
>
> **18** And the Lord called his people Zion, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them.
>
> **19** And Enoch continued his preaching in righteousness unto the people of God. And it came to pass in his days, that he built a city that was called the City of Holiness, even Zion.
>
> **20** And it came to pass that Enoch talked with the Lord; and he said unto the Lord: Surely Zion shall dwell in safety forever. But the Lord said unto Enoch: Zion have I blessed, but the residue of the people have I cursed.
>
> **21** And it came to pass that the Lord showed unto Enoch all the inhabitants of the earth; and he beheld, and lo, Zion, in process of time, was taken up into heaven. And the Lord said unto Enoch: Behold mine abode forever. ...
>
> **23** And after that Zion was taken up into heaven, Enoch beheld, and lo, all the nations of the earth were before him; ...
>
> **35** Behold, I am God; Man of Holiness is my name; Man of Counsel is my name; and Endless and Eternal is my name, also.

**(B–2) Zion: The Pure in Heart**

> "There is no fence around Zion or the world, but to one of discernment, they are separated more completely than if each were surrounded with high unscalable walls. Their underlying concepts, philosophies, and purposes are at complete variance one with the other. The philosophy of the world is self-sufficient, egotistical, materialistic, and skeptical. The philosophy of Zion is humility, not servility, but a willing recognition of the sovereignty of God and dependence on his providence." (In Conference Report, Oct. 1951, pp. 110–11.)
>
> ("Enrichment B: Establishing Zion," *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 369)

**(B–3) Ancient Zion Communities Were Established**

> Individuals who live the principles of Zion seek always to establish a community where such principles govern the personal lives and the society of all who dwell in it. Elder Bruce R. McConkie said:
>
> "... Our first scriptural account relative to Zion concerns Enoch and his city. That prophet of transcendent faith and power lived while father Adam yet dwelt in mortality. It was a day of wickedness and evil, a day of darkness and rebellion, a day of war and desolation, a day leading up to the cleansing of the earth by water."
>
> ("Enrichment B: Establishing Zion," *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), pp. 369–370)

**(B–4) Zion: The Promised Destiny of the Righteous**

> The establishment of a Zion people has not been possible in every dispensation. Individuals, however, have sought to develop righteousness and purity of heart. The wickedness of men may have prevented the building of a Zion society, but it can never prevent the practice of the principles of Zion by individuals and families.
>
> ("Enrichment B: Establishing Zion," *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 370)

## Man of Holiness

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** defines *Ahman* as:

> AHMAN:
>
> See *God, Man of Holiness, Son of Man.* In the pure language spoken by Adam—and which will be spoken again during the millennial era (Zeph. 3:9)—the name of God the Father is Ahman, or possibly Ah Man, a name-title having a meaning identical with or at least very closely akin to Man of Holiness (Moses 6:57). God revealed himself to Adam by this name to signify that he is a Holy Man, a truth which a man must know and comprehend if he is to become like God and inherit exaltation (1 John 3:1–3; D&C 132:19–24).
>
> (*Mormon Doctrine,* p. 29)

This concept comes up again in Adam-ondi-Ahman, or simply "the land of God where Adam dwelt" (*Mormon Doctrine,* p. 19–20).

God's name is "Man of Holiness," and the city of Zion was named "City of Holiness." A plainer translation in today's tongue might read "God's city," a city that God has put his stamp of approval on and has accepted into his bosom. Over the course of this planet's temporal history, there have been multiple groups of people who have obtained this status and have been taken to heaven, including Enoch's people and Melchizedek's people (JST, Genesis 14:32–34). They have all been collectively taken to the same place, a place that Latter-day Saints simply refer to as "the city of Enoch." So what does a city need to have or be for the Lord to put his name upon it as the Lord has put his name upon his church? The Savior clarifies in 3 Nephi 21:22–24 that there is a difference between his church that he puts his name on and his city that he puts his name on.

**3 Nephi 21**

> **22** But if they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance;
>
> **23** And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.
>
> **24** And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem.

The Lord has repeatedly given the commandment in scripture to "refuse none in my church." This is gone into great depth in the Book of Mormon (3 Nephi 18:30–32), as well as in the Doctrine and Covenants (D&C 46:3–6). Now where am I getting at with this? The Lord's city, Zion, City of Holiness, New Jerusalem, is a different story.

**Revelation 21**

> **27** And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

The doctrine of no unclean things entering into "Man of Holiness" locations is taught in a multitude of locations, including 3 Nephi 22:11–17, Isaiah 35:8, D&C 97:15–17, as well as in Enoch's story, which was covered above. The people in that city felt so secure from outside influences that they said, "surely we will dwell in safety forever," and the Lord clarifies, paraphrasing it, "you will dwell in safety because I have placed a border of protection around you but those outside have been cursed" (Moses 7). When the Lord casts up his highway, it will be called the "way of holiness," and no unclean thing can set foot upon it (Isaiah 35:8). We also know that no unclean thing could dwell in the Garden of Eden either; that's why Adam and Eve were kicked out after partaking of the fruit and a cherubim was placed to guard the entrance (obviously God dwelt there) (Moses 4, Genesis 3). Unclean things can and should enter The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but unclean things cannot come back into the presence of the Man of Holiness; unclean things cannot walk on the Way of Holiness; no unclean thing should enter the House of Holiness (temple); and no unclean thing can dwell in the City of Holiness.

## The Requirements

So what does a city need in order to be accepted as a city of Holiness?

**D&C 105**

> **1** Verily I say unto you who have assembled yourselves together that you may learn my will concerning the redemption of mine afflicted people—
>
> **2** Behold, I say unto you, were it not for the transgressions of my people, speaking concerning the church and not individuals, they might have been redeemed even now.
>
> **3** But behold, they have not learned to be obedient to the things which I required at their hands, but are full of all manner of evil, and do not impart of their substance, as becometh saints, to the poor and afflicted among them;
>
> **4** And are not united according to the union required by the law of the celestial kingdom;
>
> **5** And Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom; otherwise I cannot receive her unto myself.

It is true that one can and will be saved in the highest degree in the celestial kingdom if one accepts and lives according to the light that they have received (D&C 137:5–7). This, however, does not mean that a city can be accepted of the Lord simply by "doing its best with the light it has received." The people have to be living celestial law in order for the Lord to put his name on that city. So simply put, one can obtain the highest degree of the celestial kingdom without living celestial law in mortality (because it might not be available to you; but one does need to have a perfect willingness to live it), but one cannot build Zion, one cannot have a city accepted of the Lord, one cannot have a City of Holiness, without celestial law. So once we have celestial law, and then once we have a group of people living celestial law, how do we know that the Lord has accepted the city for his own? How do we know that the city has become the City of Holiness, even Zion?

**3 Nephi 21**

> **25** And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst.

**3 Nephi 20**

> **22** And behold, this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; and it shall be a New Jerusalem. And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you.

**Moses 7**

> **16** ... the Lord came and dwelt with his people, and they dwelt in righteousness. ...
>
> **62** ... for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.

## Zion, the Pure in Heart

But I can hear it now: "Micah, you are wrong, Zion is the pure in heart, which are the Latter-day Saints! I am Zion! You are Zion! We are all Zion!"

Ok, where are members getting this from?

**D&C 97**

> **21** Therefore, verily, thus saith the Lord, let Zion rejoice, for this is Zion—THE PURE IN HEART; therefore, let Zion rejoice, while all the wicked shall mourn.

Members take this and then mistakenly broad stroke the entire church as "the pure in heart," and thus Zion. But how about a little context?

**D&C 97**

> **15** And inasmuch as my people build a house unto me in the name of the Lord, and do not suffer any unclean thing to come into it, that it be not defiled, my glory shall rest upon it;
>
> **16** Yea, and my presence shall be there, ***for I will come into it, and all the pure in heart that shall come into it shall see God.***
>
> **17** But if it be defiled I will not come into it, and my glory shall not be there; for I will not come into unholy temples.
>
> **18** And, now, behold, if Zion do these things she shall prosper, and spread herself and become very glorious, very great, and very terrible.
>
> **19** And the nations of the earth shall honor her, and shall say: Surely Zion is the city of our God, and surely Zion cannot fall, neither be moved out of her place, for God is there, and the hand of the Lord is there;
>
> **20** And he hath sworn by the power of his might to be her salvation and her high tower.
>
> **21** Therefore, verily, thus saith the Lord, let Zion rejoice, for this is Zion—THE PURE IN HEART; therefore, let Zion rejoice, while all the wicked shall mourn.

Once again, Zion isn't referencing a people; it is referencing a place. A place that is special, because Holiness, His presence, is literally there.

Way of Holiness, House of Holiness, City of Holiness, Land of Holiness… So what does the Lord mean here when he says Zion is "the pure in heart," and why is that phrase capitalized? If the Lord, Holiness, is on the way, is in the house, or is in the city—who are the people who get to see him? The Lord answers this in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:8), as well as when he repeated the Sermon on the Mount to the Nephites (3 Nephi 12:8): "And blessed are all the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The Savior here is not identifying Zion as the pure in heart; the Lord is saying Zion is full of the pure in heart. The Lord says, "Therefore let the people in Zion rejoice," and the reason why he says Zion should rejoice and will be rejoicing is because they get to see Him, i.e., they are "pure in heart." So, for members who believe they are Zion, who believe they are the "pure in heart," but yet haven't seen the risen Lord in the flesh, their theory doesn't hold water. If they believe that they are Zion because they are the pure in heart, the Savior said (paraphrasing), "if you are pure in heart and are Zion, you will see me."

## Right Now

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints's job is to take us nasty, unclean, filthy creatures and get us to a condition wherein we are made ready and willing to live celestial law (D&C 105:8–13). If we as members don't humble ourselves, the Lord will have to humble us. For when time's up, time's up. The Lord has given us time to do it ourselves. When that time is past:

**D&C 105**

> **5** And Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom; otherwise I cannot receive her unto myself.
>
> **6** And my people must needs be chastened until they learn obedience, if it must needs be, by the things which they suffer.

**Revelation 7**

> **13** And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?
>
> **14** And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** summarized the New Jerusalem to be built as:

> The latter-days are to see the initial building of New Jerusalem on the American continent, a city which like its ancient counterpart will be a holy city, a Zion, a city of God (3 Nephi 20:22). This New Jerusalem is to be built by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Jackson County, Missouri, is the spot designated by revelation for its construction (D&C 28; 42:8–9, 30–42; 45:66–67; 52:2, 42–43; 57:1–5; 58:7, 44–58; 84:2–5). It shall be built when the Lord directs (*Doctrines of Salvation,* vol. 3, pp. 66–79; D&C 124:49–54).
>
> (*Mormon Doctrine,* p. 532)

**John Taylor** described this building in a vision he had, and Wilford Woodruff subsequently recorded it:

> Immediately after I seemed to be standing on the left bank of the Missouri River, opposite the City of Independence, but there was no city. I saw the whole state of Missouri and Illinois and all of Iowa, a complete desert with no living being there. A short distance from the river however, I saw twelve men dressed in temple robes, standing in a square or nearly so (and I understood it represented the Twelve Gates of the New Jerusalem.) Their hands were uplifted in consecration of the ground and laying the corner stone of the temple. I saw myriads of angels hovering over them, and saw also an immense pillar of clouds over them and heard the angels singing the most heavenly music. The words were "Now is established the Kingdom of God and his Christ, which shall never more be thrown down. I saw people coming from the river and from the desert places a long way off to help build the temple and it seemed that hosts of angels all helped to get material to build with and I saw some of them who wore temple clothes come and build the temple and the city, and all the time I saw the great pillar of clouds hovering over the place.
>
> ("A Vision, Salt Lake City, Night of Dec 16, 1877," Wilford Woodruff's Journal, June 15, 1878)

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

> **17** Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered.
>
> **18** They that remain, and are pure in heart, shall return, and come to their inheritances, they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy, to build up the waste places of Zion—
>
> **19** And all these things that the prophets might be fulfilled.
>
> **20** And, behold, there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed, for the work of the gathering of my saints—

The **Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual** says about these verses:

> Despite the Saints' expulsion from Jackson County, Missouri, the Lord reaffirmed that "Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered" (D&C 101:17). Although the stakes of Zion have spread over the face of the earth, "the center place," Jackson County, continues to be designated by the Lord as the location for the city of New Jerusalem (see D&C 57:1–3; 101:17, 20–21).
>
> **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** (1915–1985) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: "There is no occasion for uncertainty or anxiety about the building up of Zion—meaning the New Jerusalem—in the last days. The Lord once offered his people the chance to build that Zion from which the law shall go forth to all the world. They failed. Why? Because they were unprepared and unworthy, as is yet the case with those of us who now comprise the kingdom. When we as a people are prepared and worthy, the Lord will again command us and the work will go forward—on schedule, before the Second Coming, and at the direction of the President of the Church. Until then, none of us need take any personal steps toward gathering to Missouri or preparing for a landed-inheritance there. Let us, rather, learn the great concepts involved and make ourselves worthy for any work the Lord may lay upon us in our day and time. Some things must yet precede the building up of Jackson County" (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith [1985], 586).
>
> ( "Chapter 39: Doctrine and Covenants 101," *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual,* 2018)

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** on another occasion taught what we need to be doing in the meantime:

> The gathering of Israel and the establishment of Zion in the latter days is divided into three periods or phases. The first phase is past; we are now living in the second phase; and the third lies ahead. Prophecies speak of them all. If we do not rightly divide the word of God, as Paul's expression is, we will face confusion and uncertainty. If on the other hand we correctly envision our proper role and know what should be done today, we shall then be able to use our time, talents, and means to the best advantage in building up the kingdom and preparing a people for the second coming of the Son of Man.
>
> The three phases of this great latter-day work are as follows:
>
> Phase I—From the First Vision, the setting up of the kingdom on April 6, 1830, and the coming of Moses on April 3, 1836, to the secure establishment of the Church in the United States and Canada, a period of about 125 years.

> Phase II—From the creation of stakes of Zion in overseas areas, beginning in the 1950s, to the second coming of the Son of Man, a period of unknown duration.
>
> Phase III—From our Lord's second coming until the kingdom is perfected and the knowledge of God covers the earth as the waters cover the sea, and from then until the end of the Millennium, a period of 1,000 years.
>
> Many things have already been restored, and many things are yet to be restored. Israel has been gathered in part, but in many respects the greatest part of the gathering of Israel is ahead. The foundations of Zion have been laid, but the promised City of Holiness has yet to be built. We have done some of the things destined to be accomplished in this dispensation; we are now engaged in doing the very things reserved for our time; and there are many things ahead to be done by our children and grandchildren and by all those who shall build on the foundation we are now laying.
>
> ("Come: Let Israel Build Zion," *Ensign,* April 1977)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

> Prophecies about the gathering of Israel by the same prophet might seem to be repetitive. In part they are, for repetition is sound pedagogy, but they also tell of gatherings that will occur by stages and in different locations. Israel was not scattered at one time; indeed, the main phases of the scattering went forward for a thousand years. And Israel will not be gathered all at one time. The gathering commenced with the organization of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1830; it was formalized and took on a divine impetus with the restoration of the keys by Moses in 1836; and it has grown in scope and intensity ever since. Once it was centered in Kirtland, Ohio, then in Missouri, and then in Illinois. For nearly a hundred years the new converts flowed to the tops of the Rocky Mountains, and now they are counseled to remain in the stakes of Zion in the nations of their inheritance. It will thus continue on a worldwide basis until the Second Coming and then go on into the Millennium for as long as is necessary to perfect the work and convert the world. We see no reason why this Millennial phase should take longer than a single generation.
>
> (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith,* pp. 545–546)

At this time, it is important to combat some misconceptions about this New Jerusalem and the building of it.

## First Misconception

The first misconception is that the 144,000, New Jerusalem, return of the 10 tribes, etc., are either all figurative or that the original plan has changed.

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** addressed this first misconception thus:

> CITY OF ZION AND TEMPLE YET TO BE BUILT
>
> Nearly 100 years have passed since the site of Zion was dedicated and the spot for the temple was chosen, and some of the members of the Church seem to be fearful lest the word of the Lord shall fail. Others have tried to convince themselves that the original plan has been changed and that the Lord does not require at our hands this mighty work which has been predicted by the prophets of ancient times. We have not been released from this responsibility, nor shall we be. The word of the Lord will not fail.
>
> If we look back and examine his word carefully, we will discover that nothing has failed of all that he has predicted, neither shall one jot or tittle pass away unfulfilled. It is true that the Lord commanded the saints to build to his name a temple in Zion. This they attempted to do, but were prevented by their enemies, so the Lord did not require the work at their hands at that time. The release from the building of the temple did not, however, cancel the responsibility of building the City and the House of the Lord, at some future time. When the Lord gets ready for it to be accomplished, he will command his people, and the work will be done.
>
> TWO MILLENNIAL WORLD CAPITALS
>
> This western continent is known as the land of Joseph and is also designated as the land of Zion. The holy city which is to be built upon this land is sometimes called the City of Zion. We should keep in mind that these terms (City of Zion, and New Jerusalem) have reference to the same sanctified place from whence shall go forth the law, with the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Enoch's city was also called Zion, which means by interpretation, the pure in heart.
>
> TWO HOLY CITIES: JERUSALEM AND NEW JERUSALEM
>
> Jerusalem of old, after the Jews have been cleansed and sanctified from all their sin, shall become a holy city where the Lord shall dwell and from whence he shall send forth his word unto all people. Likewise, on this continent, the city of Zion, New Jerusalem, shall be built and from it the law of God shall also go forth. There will be no conflict, for each city shall be headquarters for the Redeemer of the world, and from each he shall send forth his proclamations as occasion may require. Jerusalem shall be the gathering place of Judah and his fellows of the house of Israel, and Zion shall be the gathering place of Ephraim and his fellows, upon whose heads shall be conferred "the richer blessings."
>
> (*Doctrines of Salvation,* Volume 3)

**Parley P. Pratt,** speaking of Psalm 102 (specifically verses 13–16), said:

> From this scripture we learn, First, that there is a set time to build up Zion, or the city of which Isaiah speaks; namely just before the second coming of Christ, and that when this city is built the Lord will appear in his glory, and not before; So from this we affirm, that, if such a city is never built, then the Lord will never come.
>
> (*A Voice of Warning,* p. 177)

## Second Misconception

The second misconception, or misunderstanding, regarding the New Jerusalem is that the New Jerusalem in Jackson County won't actually be built, but it will simply fall out of heaven and land like in a sci-fi spaceship movie.

We have already gone over enough quotes to quite confidently say that the New Jerusalem that is to be built in Jackson County—Zion, which will become a City of Holiness—will be built by both mortal hands and angels.

But let me add one more series of quotes from **Joseph Smith** before continuing.

> THE ELECT MUST BE GATHERED
>
> Moses, after having pronounced the blessing and cursing upon the children of Israel, for their obedience or disobedience, says thus:
>
> "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind, among all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey His voice, according to all that I command thee, this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will He fetch thee" (Deut. 30:1–4).
>
> THE NEW JERUSALEM

> It has been said by many of the learned and wise men, or historians, that the Indians or aborigines of this continent, are of the scattered tribes of Israel. It has been conjectured by many others, that the aborigines of this continent are not of the tribes of Israel, but the ten tribes have been led away into some unknown regions of the north. Let this be as it may, the prophecy I have just quoted "will fetch them," in the last days, and place them in the land which their fathers possessed. And you will find in the 7th verse of the 30th chapter, quoted, "And the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee."
>
> Many may say that this scripture is fulfilled, but let them mark carefully what the prophet says: "If any are driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven," (Which must mean the breadth of the earth). ... And again (see Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 20:22, current edition, which says), "Behold this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob, and it shall be a New Jerusalem." Now we learn from the Book of Mormon the very identical continent and spot of land upon which the New Jerusalem is to stand, and it must be caught up according to the vision of John upon the isle of Patmos.
>
> Now many will feel disposed to say, that this New Jerusalem spoken of, is the Jerusalem that was built by the Jews on the eastern continent. But you will see, from Revelation 21:2, there was a New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband; that after this, the Revelator was caught away in the Spirit, to a great and high mountain, and saw the great and holy city descending out of heaven from God. Now there are two cites spoken of here. As everything cannot be had in so narrow a compass as a letter, I shall say with brevity, that there is a New Jerusalem to be established on this continent, and also Jerusalem shall be rebuilt on the eastern continent (see Book of Mormon, Ether 13:1–12).
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 84–86)

These individuals take this quote from Moses, saying that Israel will be scattered to the "outmost parts of heaven," and then they combine that with "come down from heaven" to infer that this is how the New Jerusalem will be built. The problem with that interpretation is that the prophet Joseph Smith clearly defines the "outmost parts of heaven" as "must [meaning] the breadth of the earth." He then says that there is a city that is going to be caught up at the Great and Dreadful Day just as another one is coming down. He goes on to explain that people's confusion arises because they think there is only one City of Holiness. There are actually three in just that time period alone. We know that when the New Jerusalem in America is caught up at the Great and Dreadful Day ("a new heaven and a new earth," "the end come when the earth shall pass away"), it joins with the city of Enoch coming down (Moses 7:62–64, Ether 13:8–11). The third city is Jerusalem.

So why must the city in Jackson County be built by those in the flesh and not simply appear from heaven? There is power in doing things in the flesh which cannot be done outside the flesh. This concept alone could take up an entire seminar. If angels could do everything, there would be no need for prophets. If God could simply drop down a New Jerusalem complete with celestial, angelic inhabitants, why hasn't He done so before at any time? And if He hasn't done it before, what makes one think He will do it in the future? Mortals have to bring heaven to them through their faith and works. And more specifically, families are required to bring the Lord into a city.

**President Kimball** taught us:

> When Satan is bound in a single home—when Satan is bound in a single life—the Millennium has already begun in that home, in that life.
>
> (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball,* p. 172)

But we will leave that topic for now, as it is lengthy, and will simply say that we know that the city must be built by mortal hands. And now I'll pivot directly to what the prophets have seen and said when they saw "the New Jerusalem, which should come down out of heaven" (Ether 13:3; Revelation 21:2).

## New Jerusalem from Heaven

The phrase "the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven" crops up in a few places, Ether 13 and Revelation 21 being but a few. The point that most people are missing—and once I point it out, most people will smack their head and think, "oh wow, how did I forget about that" is—there is more than one "New Jerusalem." The quotes above by Joseph Fielding Smith and Joseph Smith brought your attention to that very fact when they said that the city of Enoch shares the same name as Zion (Jackson County), and the old Jerusalem will also be rebuilt, so all three share similar names. So, can a prophet be standing in Jackson County, a city of Holiness, a "New Jerusalem," and look up and see another "New Jerusalem coming down from heaven"? The answer is yes! Do we have such a prophecy? Is it laid out distinctly and coherently? Yes, it is.

Turning to **Moses 7:62–64**:

> **62** And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; ...

Doing a point of reference, many members will say the righteousness out of heaven is the restoration of keys, powers, priesthood to the earth, and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon is the truth sent forth out of the earth. I have a different interpretation that I believe is correct and will become more apparent as we go through the rest of these verses. I believe that this is Joseph Smith coming down from heaven after his resurrection, and the truth that is being called forth from out of the earth is the 10 tribes. We will get into both the return of Joseph Smith and then ten tribes in great detail in later chapters; it isn't important to the point being made here. Notice, however, that right up front this interpretation makes more sense, as we know from the history of the church that the Book of Mormon came forth ***before*** any of the keys, priesthood, etc. So right off the bat, you have a chronology problem with the first interpretation. Secondly, once again, the Lord is making reference to this event testifying of "the resurrection of all men." Why would that be included here? Because the Lord says in Doctrine and Covenants 63:53 (47–54 for more context) that the resurrection, or more specifically the resurrection of a single man, is the sign that we should look for.

Continuing with the verse:

> **62** ... and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, ...

Members put this point of reference as the missionary force sweeping the earth. I, however, put this as the 144,000 going forth and sweeping the earth, which is confirmed by Joseph Smith in *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 84. Let us continue reading,

> **62** ... unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.

This is where the other interpretation completely turns to ash. Missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as much as they would like to think they are, are not gathering people to Zion; they are gathering people into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. And just in case people might be tempted to say that this is a figurative statement, the Lord says "no, no, no, my tabernacle (meaning my body) will be in the midst of that city," and the city's name will be the New Jerusalem. So, you tell me—do you think missionaries from the church are baptizing people and bringing them to a city that Je-

sus Christ himself is living in and bears the name the New Jerusalem? Missionaries aren't even bringing people to the temple; missionaries don't even have the keys to get members or non-members into the temple, only into the waters of baptism. The 144,000, on the other hand, have the keys given them to seal up unto life eternal or unto damnation (D&C 77:8, 11). Their mission is to bring people into the Church of the Firstborn. The Church of the Firstborn are members who have had their calling and election made sure ("Revelation 7:4–8," *New Testament Student Manual;* Bruce R McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine,* Church of the Firstborn), i.e., they have seen and can see Jesus Christ and have been sealed up unto eternal life, i.e., they are pure in heart. So, in this verse we learn that Joseph Smith returns, New Jerusalem is redeemed and is being built, he calls the 10 tribes home, the 144,000 are chosen, purified and sent out into the world as a flood one last time to hunt out the elect (Jeremiah 16:16), and they are getting those elect and funneling them to New Jerusalem.

Then verse 63 happens:

> **63** And the Lord said unto Enoch: ***Then*** shalt thou and all thy city meet them there, and we will receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other;
>
> **64** And there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest.

Well, that is interesting, because around the time that the 144,000 are sent off, Jesus will be living in New Jerusalem ("my tabernacle.") Around that time, the 7th seal will be opened. What else happens around the time of the 7th seal being opened? The sign of the Son of Man, which is the city of Enoch returning. We then hear about a space of half an hour of silence in heaven before the Great and Dreadful Day. Why is there silence in heaven? Because the Lord's tabernacle is no longer in heaven; it is on earth. His voice will no longer be uttered from heaven, but will be roaring forth from New Jerusalem. Do we have any other scriptural references to pinpoint the return of the city of Enoch?

In the **JST of Genesis 14** we read:

> **32** And men having this faith, coming up unto this order of God, were translated and taken up into heaven.
>
> **33** And now, Melchizedek was a priest of this order; therefore he obtained peace in Salem, and was called the Prince of peace.
>
> **34** And his people wrought righteousness, and obtained heaven, and sought for the city of Enoch which God had before taken, separating it from the earth, having reserved it unto the latter days, or the end of the world;

So, we learn that those translated join that same city. We then learn that this city is to return at "the end of the world", so when is that?

**Joseph Smith—Matthew 1**

> **4** And Jesus left them, and went upon the Mount of Olives. And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying: Tell us when shall these things be which thou hast said concerning the destruction of the temple, and the Jews; and what is the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world, or the destruction of the wicked, which is the end of the world?

This is clearly referencing the Great and Dreadful Day, where everything of a telestial order will be destroyed, and the world will be partially rolled back into the presence of God. This does not reference the Lord's second coming in New Jerusalem or the Lord's second coming events at the Mount of Olives. Around the time of the 7th seal being opened and the Lord's anointing in Adam-ondi-Ahman, the city of Enoch will begin to make its return. During this time period, the Savior's tabernacle will be in Jackson County. The sign of the Son of Man, the city of Enoch returning, will get brighter and brighter over the course of 21 years until it consumes our sky and arrives at the Great and Dreadful Day, about the space of half an hour in heaven after the anointing in New Jerusalem. During those 21 years, the tabernacle of the Lord will be living in New Jerusalem, a city of Holiness, in Jackson County. If one were to look up, they could say that they also, "saw New Jerusalem, a city of Holiness, Zion" coming down from heaven. Where will the city of Enoch return? From where it was taken—the American continent.

## Double Check Our Work

Let's turn to **Revelation 21:2–24,** and let's just make sure the interpretation jibes:

> **2** And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

So here we have John seeing the holy city, New Jerusalem, the city of Holiness, coming down out of heaven. This is the city of Enoch coming down.

> **3** And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

So, what does this mean? This is heaven declaring that Jesus is no longer up there; Jesus is in Jackson County, Missouri.

> **4** And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.
>
> **5** And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.
>
> **6** And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.
>
> **7** He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

These verses are referencing the peace the Saints will have with the Savior as their King of kings in Jackson County, Missouri. "But wait!" I hear one say, "This is referring to after the Great and Dreadful Day, not the time period between New Jerusalem and the Great and Dreadful Day!" Well, let's keep reading.

> **8** But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, ***shall*** have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

"Shall have" is a reference to the future, not the present.

In **Daniel chapter 7,** we learn about the anointing in verse 14, where the Lord was "given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom." This is referring to the New Jerusalem. Continuing to read, "that all people, nations, and languages, ***should*** serve him." From the New Jerusalem to the Great and Dreadful Day, there will be many people, nations, tongues, etc., that do not serve the Lord. They will progressively be destroyed during those 21 years as the vials are poured out **(Revelation 8 and 16)**, culminating in the Great and Dreadful Day, where all the wicked will be burned to stubble.

Speaking of the vials, let's go back to verse 9, in which John is taken by the angel who had one of the vials, was "carried away in the spirit to a great and high mountain," and then was shown the city. This terminology is used repeatedly by prophets to describe being taken off of the earth into the mountain of the Lord, which we would call space. Many prophets, after being taken up, the very first thing they see is the whole world (if you have been to the temple, think of the temple video). In this

case, John is taken to the city of Enoch, which is returning, and the fact that he is taken in reality to space to see the city of Enoch returning, and not to that of the New Jerusalem in Jackson County, should be painfully obvious when you get to **Revelation 21:22–24.**

**Revelation 21**

> **22** And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

This alone obliterates the interpretation that this city of Holiness is the same city that's in Jackson County, because it is easy to prove that there will be more than one temple in Jackson County, Missouri. But in case you still want a little more proof, let's keep reading:

> **23** And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

While the city of Enoch is returning, it will be flying through space, and thus won't have a sun or a moon. John here, to calm your mind, lets you know that while they are thus travelling, they won't need a sun or a moon; they won't die in transit. (Why wouldn't the Saints in Jackson County have a sun or a moon?) He says that the Lord's glory will sustain them, and we know that the glory of the Lord is light, which is intelligence.

> **24** And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

We learn from verse 27 of the same chapter that no unclean thing is in this city. This is not referring to the worldly kings of the earth, it is referring to the kings that the Lord will be king over; it is referring to what was discussed in JST Genesis—those that sought for the city of Enoch and obtained it.

Let's break down one more set of scriptures that has all three locations in it: the City of Enoch, Jackson County, and Israel—all of which are or will be a City of Holiness, even Zion, etc.

**Ether 13:2–10**

> **2** For behold, they rejected all the words of Ether; for he truly told them of all things, from the beginning of man; and that after the waters had receded from off the face of this land it became a choice land above all other lands, a chosen land of the Lord; wherefore the Lord would have that all men should serve him who dwell upon the face thereof;
>
> **3** And that it....

It is important to identify the "it" here, which is America, the choice land, but more specifically, ancient America.

> **3** ... was the place of the New Jerusalem, ...

Ok, what "New Jerusalem" existed on ancient America? The city of Enoch.

> **3** ... which should come down out of heaven, and the holy sanctuary of the Lord.

So, this is confirming that the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven is the city of Enoch.

Verse 4 deals with Jackson County, verse 5 deals with Old Jerusalem, verses 6–8 deal with Jackson County New Jerusalem, and then verse 9 talks about the Great and Dreadful Day. So, to recap, New Jerusalem in Jackson County gets built, Old Jerusalem gets rebuilt, and then verse 9 says that the Great and Dreadful Day happens.

> **10** And then...

Verse 10 should now be interesting. "And then" is a point of reference. These are important because The Book of Mormon and ancient scripture were written without punctuation. This was the only way for them to combine thoughts and give chronology. "And then" means "after the event that was previously described," and what was previously described was the Great and Dreadful Day—"a new heaven and a new earth." Continuing with the verse,

> **10** ... cometh the New Jerusalem; ...

We know that the city of Enoch will return at the Great and Dreadful Day. Verses 10–11 describe the process after the world is partially rolled back into the presence of the Lord and made terrestrial, the process of people and cities who were "caught up" returning back to the earth, and the order of their return.

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** summarized Ether 13:2–11 thus:

> In the day of regeneration, when all things are made new, there will be three great cities that will be holy. One will be the Jerusalem of old which shall be rebuilt according to the prophecy of Ezekiel. One will be the city of Zion, or of Enoch, which was taken from the earth when Enoch was translated and which will be restored; and the city of Zion, or New Jerusalem, which is to be built by the seed of Joseph on this the American continent (Moses 7:62–64)... .During this cleansing period the City Zion, or New Jerusalem, will be taken from the earth; and when the earth is prepared for the celestial glory, the city will come down according to the prediction in the Book of Revelation.
>
> (*Answers to Gospel Questions,* 2:103–6)

And **Bruce R. McConkie** summarized this thus:

> Enoch saw the latter-day restoration of the gospel and the subsequent building of the Nexw Jerusalem. "Righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare," the Lord told him, "an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem. And the Lord said unto Enoch: Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there, and we will receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other." (Moses 7:60–63.) Thus it is that the New Jerusalem shall be built by the saints and shall also come down from heaven.
>
> Having in mind these glorious truths relative to the millennial New Jerusalem and the celestial city of the same name, knowing that Enoch's Zion had been taken to heaven and would return again, the ancient prophets "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," confessing the while "that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." And God "hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. 11:9–16), that is, he has prepared it for those who gain salvation, for such "come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb. 12:22).
>
> (*Mormon Doctrine,* p. 533)

# The Parable of the Ten Virgins

## Multiple Interpretations

> As you study this parable, consider the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: "[The Savior's] parables had multiple meanings or applications according to the spiritual maturity of the listener. They had a message for both children and gospel scholars" ("Scripture Reading and Revelation," Ensign, Jan. 1995, 8). Look for multiple meanings and applications in this parable (see also Bible Dictionary, "Parables").
>
> ("Unit 22: Day 1, Doctrine and Covenants 101:43–101; 102," *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students,* 2017)

There are many interpretations to parables. If you have heard somebody interpret a parable or teach a parable in a different way, good for you and good for them. Someone else's interpretation does not invalidate learning gained from other interpretations. So we need to understand, going into any parable, that there will be multiple interpretations and multiple ways to apply the parable.

**Elder Bednar,** speaking of the ten virgins parable specifically teaches and reaffirms this truth:

> I now want to use ***one of many*** possible interpretations of the parable of the ten virgins to highlight the relationship between testimony and conversion.
>
> ("Converted unto the Lord," General Conference, October 2012)

## Primary vs. Secondary Interpretations

With that said, however, while there are many interpretations or applications of parables that can be of use and edification, that is not what we will be doing in our parable breakdowns. Even though there are multiple interpretations and applications, there is only one primary interpretation or application.

In this book, I will go over parables of the utmost importance that have been used so often in their secondary and tertiary forms that most members don't understand or even know the primary interpretation of the parables. Can parables be interpreted or likened in multiple ways for the benefit of man? Yes. Can washing the vase and the dishes and placing them on a clean cloth add symbolic weight to traditions and ordinances (Mark 7:4–23)? Yes. The problem comes when the washing of the dishes in the eyes of the participant becomes the primary activity and they neglect the actual primary purpose. Jesus, pointing the Jews towards their behavior in doing this very thing, said you "have omitted the weightier matters of the law" (Matthew 23:23–28).

## Unlocking the Primary Interpretation

Understanding how the Lord teaches is crucial to understanding the primary intent of the parable. Joseph Smith had a laugh at a member who thought that the beast kingdoms described in Daniel's vision were symbols of God's kingdoms. **Joseph Smith** said, "the Lord would never make use of a figure of a beast nor any of the brute kind to represent His Kingdom" (*TPJS,* p. 289). Joseph Smith taught that every jot and tittle of the word had to be literally fulfilled, and this includes parables, visions, etc. Joseph Smith, in identifying that the Lord, even in a parable or vision, wouldn't use something ungodly to represent something godly, clarifies that even the symbols in parables have to make sense. **Joseph Smith** also taught on another occasion the best way to go about trying to find this primary purpose: "I have a key by which I understand the scriptures. I inquire, what was the question which drew out the answer, or caused Jesus to utter the parable?" (*TPJS,* p. 276–277) Joseph then goes on to explain that the question being answered is the primary interpretation and "all straining on this point is a bubble" (*TPJS,* p. 277).

So in summary, if your interpretation doesn't:

1. Answer the question being asked specifically
2. Have all of the symbols make sense,

then what you are teaching is a secondary interpretation of the parable. For it to be the primary interpretation, it must answer the question, and all symbols in the parable must make sense.

## Be Not Deceived

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

> **56** And at that day… shall the parable be fulfilled which I spake concerning the ten virgins.
>
> **57** For they that are wise and have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived—verily I say unto you, they shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day.

How were they deceived? They were not taught and/or did not understand the primary interpretation of this parable by seeking the Holy Ghost as their guide, and thus did not prepare accordingly. Instead, they have done what Joseph Smith warned of: "if the people departed from the Lord, they must fall—that they were depending on the prophet, hence were darkened in their minds, in consequence of neglecting the duties devolving upon themselves, envious towards the innocent, while they afflict the virtuous with their shafts of envy" (*TPJS,* p. 238). Thus they were deceived, thinking they were prepared. They took no responsibility for themselves, but dumped all responsibility for learning and warning on the prophet. But in that day, they will find they have "no oil" in their lamps. Let us learn the primary interpretation and prepare accordingly.

## The Question

Firstly, what drew this parable out from the Savior?

**Joseph Smith—Matthew 1**

> **1** Then understood his disciples that [Jesus] should come again on the earth, after that he was glorified and crowned on the right hand of God.
>
> …
>
> **4** And Jesus left them, and went upon the Mount of Olives. And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying: Tell us when shall these things be which thou hast said concerning the destruction of the temple, and the Jews; and what is the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world, or the destruction of the wicked, which is the end of the world?

The parable of the 10 virgins and the parable of the talents both begin with "the kingdom of heaven will be likened…" The JST makes this crystal clear: "And then, at that day, before the Son of Man comes, ***the kingdom of heaven*** will be likened as…" The kingdom of ***heaven*** is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It is not referencing the world. Jesus, in these parables, is describing the state and events that will transpire in the church preparatory for the Second Coming.

In summary, the question was, "when are you coming back, and how will we recognize it?" Jesus answers and gives an entire chapter on the state of the world generally, and then proceeds to explain what the church and its membership will be like at that day.

## The Symbols

**Matthew 25 (JST)**

> **1** And then, at that day, before the Son of Man comes, the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.
>
> **2** And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.
>
> **3** They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:
>
> **4** But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
>
> **5** While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.
>
> **6** And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.
>
> **7** Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.
>
> **8** And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.
>
> **9** But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.
>
> **10** And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.
>
> **11** Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.
>
> **12** But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, ye know me not.
>
> **13** Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Eight out of the ten symbols we know, and they should be obvious to members as we go through them:

1. **The Bridegroom.** This is Jesus. This is confirmed when the Lord says, "for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein ***the Son of man*** cometh." This is proof that this parable is dealing with New Jerusalem and not the events at Old Jerusalem or the Great and Dreadful Day, for the Saints of God will know the day and the hour of the Mount of Olives and the Great and Dreadful Day after the events in New Jerusalem.
2. **The Marriage.** The Lord only refers to marriage in context of "the kingdom of heaven" in one way—married to His people. We know from Daniel 7 what event the actual marriage is: it is when Christ is crowned in Adam-ondi-Ahman, that all nations should serve Him (the anointing). The people attending the marriage are the same people the Lord is marrying, so to argue that the Lord is marrying someone else and not the virgins in the parable is purely semantics; it is one step removed. For all intents and purposes, they are the same thing. This is further proof that the primary interpretation of this parable does not refer to the events at Old Jerusalem or the Great and Dreadful Day. There are some members who view this parable as though the Bridegroom was already married and the ten virgins are merely waiting to go to the wedding feast—this is utter pish posh. The Lord clearly says he was "tarrying"; he did not say he was getting married. And when the five wise virgins went in with him, the Lord clearly says "to the marriage," not to a marriage feast. Once again, secondary interpretations can be useful, and prophecies and parables can have multiple fulfillments; however, this cannot be the primary interpretation.
3. **The Ten Virgins.** These are those members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who have the potential to become members of the Church of the Firstborn. If they had not done all that was required to at least hear the invitation, they would not have been where they were. They are referred to as virgins; if the Lord would not use beasts or brutes to symbolize His kingdom, why would He liken a virgin to an inactive or non-member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or in fine, any unrighteous persons who did not have the right to be there? All ten were active, endowed members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, wearing their "wedding clothes." The Lord differentiates these ten virgins as foolish and wise, not wicked and righteous. In the Lord's eyes, if you are an inactive member or somebody who does not pay tithing, etc., you are wicked (D&C 84:53). Not paying tithing, for example, in the eyes of the Lord makes you a robber (3 Nephi 24:8; Malachi 3:8); the Lord would not refer to you as a foolish virgin, but a wicked servant who is robbing Him. If the five foolish were ready, they would have been admitted.
4. **Wedding Clothes.** The Church of God, or Bride of Christ, will be "adorned as a bride," meaning wearing wedding clothes. The Wedding clothes are not specifically mentioned in Matthew 25, but are mentioned in the Book of Revelation, the parable of the King's Son's wedding in which the King kicks out of the wedding everyone not wearing the wedding garments (Matthew 22:1–14), and by the Lord himself when talking about the church as a bride (D&C 109:72–76). This was a customary piece of clothing that was required to be worn at the wedding. It can be assumed that if the virgins were attending this wedding to be married, then wedding clothes, or wedding garments, were present. This was clearly used to represent garments and righteousness/cleanliness, not just in the parable, but also in the Jewish custom. This should clarify beyond any doubt who these ten virgins are.
5. **The Five Wise Virgins.** These are those of the ten who were "ready." In the parable, the only thing that differentiated the virgins was this readiness, represented by oil.
6. **The Five Foolish Virgins.** These are those of the ten who were not ready; they took no oil with them. It is important to note that they knew the importance of oil, for they took their lamps with them, meaning, they were either procrastinating getting oil or felt entitled for it to be provided to them.
7. **The Wick.** This is the revealer. You can hide the fact that you don't have oil; the wick reveals whether or not you have any oil at all. The act of lighting the wick and showing that you had some oil in your lamp was what got you into the procession to the wedding. It is interesting to note that even the foolish trimmed their wicks, an outward appearance, meaning even up to that point, they still thought they were getting in, expecting oil to be provided.
8. **The Sellers.** These are those in the world that have the potential to sell oil. This bit of insight gives us understanding about the oil. The oil was something that was relatively easy to acquire. It also tells us that these people that sell are not members of the Church because they weren't invited to the wedding, and they weren't referred to in any endearing terms (e.g., virgin, good shepherd, good man of the house, etc.). This also eliminates from the primary interpretation anything intangible for the use of oil, for if the Lord would not refer to anything regarding His kingdom in brutish terms, why would He compare anything of an intangible nature, which can only be acquired in the church, to something that can be commonly purchased with money from those not in the church. They are literally opposites. We know that the oil is significant enough that it will keep someone out from the wedding, but we also know that it is insignificant enough that random people in the streets sell it. Thus we know that the oil itself has no value; the holding of oil has value. The object itself isn't of eternal weight, but the acquisition and holding of it in preparedness and readiness is what grants one entry.

There are two things left that we need to identify. What do we know about these two things so far?

1. **The Lamp.** All endowed, active members of the Church, all ten virgins, had one. All knew the value of it and took one with them.

All knew that they needed oil in it for the lamp to function, but they didn't need to currently have oil in order to hold the lamp. They didn't light the lamp because it wasn't required until the procession started moving. Every endowed member understood the importance of it; all knew it was required to get in. Five held the lamp and made sure there was always some oil in the lamp, whereas the other five held the lamp but expected oil to be provided.

2. **The Oil.** The very first and most important thing you need to understand about the oil is that the foolish virgins asked the wise virgins for some. We have already identified these virgins as active, endowed members. Would they ask for a testimony? Would they ask for any of these ridiculous things that people think the oil's primary representation is? Wouldn't they know more than anyone that those intangible things (such as prayers, acts of service, fasting, etc.) can't simply be willed to someone else? So, the oil has to be something that, in theory, could move from party to party—else why would they ask? However, the transaction is denied, meaning the act of moving it from party to party would make both parties unworthy, or there is a limited quantity of it and there is not enough to share, or both. The second thing to understand is that the foolish virgins wanted the oil. Asking for something implies both that it can be transferred ***and*** that the recipient wants it. Members of the church frankly aren't very good at missionary work, and not because of a lack of skill—they simply don't make the effort. Those who are familiar with missionary work get familiar with human nature, and anyone who is familiar with human nature knows that when you offer an unworthy person intangible truths in exchange for their tangible actions, and if they are attached to their tangible actions, there is a good chance they become defensive or hostile (for "the wicked take the truth to be hard"). Simply put, unrighteous people never ask for such things, and offering to give them such things makes them hostile. When the Lord explains groups of people being separated based off of worthiness, he says "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (i.e., they become hostile). These five virgins did not become hostile; they asked for the oil thinking it would be provided, went to the market to buy it, and then still tried to get in. Those are not the actions of individuals who have spent their whole lives unworthy; they are the actions of a desperate, worthy person who was not ready.

## The Oil

To further unpack the symbol of the oil, let us return to Joseph Smith's advice, "what drew out the parable?" Directly before giving the parable of the ten virgins and the parable of the talents, Jesus Christ taught his disciples:

**Matthew 24**

> **36** But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.
>
> **37** But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.
>
> **38** For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark,
>
> **39** And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.
>
> **40** Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.
>
> **41** Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.
>
> **42** Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

Then he continued and taught this:

**Matthew 24**

> **43** But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.
>
> **44** Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.
>
> **45** Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?
>
> **46** Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.
>
> **47** Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.
>
> **48** But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;
>
> **49** And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;
>
> **50** The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,
>
> **51** And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

First, why did he teach them these things? Because the apostles asked, "what is going to be the state of the church and the world before your second coming?" In Matthew 24, Jesus then proceeds to explain the state of the world leading up to the second coming, culminating in the last two paragraphs above. He then teaches the parable of the ten virgins and the parable of the talents. Why? To further clarify verses 36–51. So what is taught in verses 36–42 is synonymous with the parable of the 10 virgins, and what is taught in verses 43–51 is synonymous with the parable of the talents. What's discussed in verses 43–51, as well as the parable of the talents, deals with the events at Adam-ondi-Ahman. Elder McConkie stated, "at this council, all who have held keys of authority will give an accounting of their stewardship to Adam. Christ will then come, receive back the keys, and thus take one of the final steps preparatory to reigning personally upon the earth (Daniel 7:9–14; *TPJS* p.157)." The Savior taught three total parables in the next chapter: the parable of the ten virgins, the parable of the talents, and the parable of the sheep and goats. These three appear in chronology—the parable of the ten virgins deals with the redemption of Zion and the initial building of New Jerusalem preparatory to that meeting in Adam-ondi-Ahman.

So taking a look at what was said in verses 36–42 will help us understand the primary interpretation of the oil and lamp in the parable of the ten virgins. The first thing he talks about is Noah—how does the story of Noah go? Noah preaches for 120 years, people ignore him, his family enters the ark, and the other people were carrying on as if nothing was happening until the floods came. The flooding occurred for a year. What are the comparisons? Noah and his family would be the wise virgins, those outside the ark would be the foolish virgins, the ark would represent the lamps, and the oil would be the year supply of food in the ark. Yes, the people should have listened to Noah's spiritual warnings, but it was the physical rain that killed them. It was what was physically in the ark that they wanted, not anything of a spiritual nature. When people were fleeing to the ark, which was already shut, the people were not fleeing for a spiritual sermon; they were not asking for a tithing settlement, a temple recommend, prayers, etc.; they wanted in the ark. It is very likely that those unprepared for the flood thought that due to Noah's righteousness, he would open the ark to them, but it was shut, "lest there [was] not enough for [him] and [them]." After teaching about Noah, the Lord said that people would start to be "taken," and he says "one here, one there," etc., which was 50% of the total—one out of two in a field, one out of two at the mill—just like 50% of the virgins being ready and 50% unready.

**Doctrine and Covenants 63**

> **52** Wherefore, for this cause preached the apostles unto the world the resurrection of the dead.
>
> **53** These things are the things that ye must look for; and, speaking after the manner of the Lord, they are now nigh at hand, and in a time to come, even in the day of the coming of the Son of Man.
>
> **54** And until that hour there will be foolish virgins among the wise; and at that hour cometh an entire separation of the righteous and the wicked; and in that day will I send mine angels to pluck out the wicked and cast them into unquenchable fire.

## If the Past is Prologue

If we know that this parable deals with the redemption of Zion and the building of New Jerusalem in Jackson County, Missouri, is there anything in the history of the Church and/or the revelations of the Church that could shed further light on the subject? The answer is yes!

When the revelation was received that the New Jerusalem was to be built in Missouri, the Lord laid out in revelation not only where New Jerusalem was to be built, but how it was to be built, who would be the ones building it, when people would be allowed to come in to it, etc. This information should give us strong indications on who the Lord views as wise and foolish virgins. We know this, for the Lord declared that the Saints were "laying the foundation of Zion" (D&C 58:7–12, 124:118), that Zion would be built "by and by" (D&C 63:35–36), "that the time is not yet" (D&C 58:44,58), "but according to the Lord's time it is nigh at hand." (D&C 58:1–5; 63:52–54). Repeatedly, the Lord made it clear that even though Zion would not be built in that generation (1830s), the foundation would be the example, "the ensample" (D&C 58:35–56; 72:23–26), for how it will happen in the future.

**D&C 58**

> **7** And also that you might be honored in laying the foundation, and in bearing record of the land upon which the Zion of God shall stand;
>
> **8** And also that a feast of fat things might be prepared for the poor; yea, a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined, that the earth may know that the mouths of the prophets shall not fail;
>
> **9** Yea, a supper of the house of the Lord, well prepared, unto which all nations shall be invited.
>
> **10** First, the rich and the learned, the wise and the noble;
>
> **11** And after that cometh the day of my power; then shall the poor, the lame, and the blind, and the deaf, come in unto the marriage of the Lamb, and partake of the supper of the Lord, prepared for the great day to come.
>
> **12** Behold, I, the Lord, have spoken it.

Members were required to commit to living the gospel in its fulness as well as to live the law of consecration. In order to get to Zion the New Jerusalem, members had to present multiple certificates to prove the above. These certificates were "required to be carried with them showing that they were in full fellowship ***and*** worthy to obtain the blessings which in Zion awaited the obedient" (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 1:271). A modern equivalent to one of these certificates is what is currently known as a temple recommend, but what was the other certificate and how did they acquire it? Members were required to "lay all things before the bishop in Zion" (D&C 42:31–42, 72:15)—this is referring to a temporal nature. Then, "the elders shall pay for that which they receive" (D&C 72:9–26)—they would use their temporal wealth to secure an inheritance at New Jerusalem. The individual or family would then be given stewardships in New Jerusalem. The spirit of revelation would be given to the bishop to be able to discern whether the individual had consecrated all they had (D&C 72:24). This is significant because one could not will portions of their resources to another and then consecrate what was left to the church; this would have been viewed by the Lord as "withholding" from him and thus "theft." A story of such individuals was recorded in the New Testament with Peter (Acts 4:34–37, 5:1–11). They were also commanded to live the law of consecration, yet Ananias and Sapphira did withhold a part of their consecration (for unlisted reasons; they could have been paying off their daughter's debt, we don't know). That fact was revealed to Peter through the spirit, and both individuals died, for as the manual states, "they also lied to God about the price they had received for a piece of land so they could avoid giving the full profit to the Church" ("Chapter 30: Acts 3–7 ," *New Testament Student Manual,* 2018). Once an individual passed the consecration interview and was found to be a "wise steward," they were given a certificate to show such. They would then show the certificate for entry into Zion.

**Doctrine and Covenants 72**

> **9** The word of the Lord, in addition to the law which has been given, making known the ***duty of the bishop*** who has been ordained unto the church in this part of the vineyard, which is verily this—
>
> **10** ***To keep the Lord's storehouse; to receive the funds of the church*** in this part of the vineyard;
>
> **11** To take an account of the elders as before has been commanded; and to administer to their wants, who ***shall pay for that which they receive, inasmuch as they have wherewith to pay;***
>
> **13** ***And he who hath not wherewith to pay, an account shall be taken and handed over to the bishop of Zion, who shall pay the debt out of that which the Lord shall put into his hands.***
>
> **14** ***And the labors of the faithful who labor in spiritual things, in administering the gospel and the things of the kingdom unto the church, and unto the world, shall answer the debt unto the bishop in Zion;***
>
> **15** Thus it cometh out of the church, ***for according to the law every man that cometh up to Zion must lay all things before the bishop in Zion.***
>
> **17** ***A certificate from the judge or bishop in this part of the vineyard, unto the bishop in Zion, rendereth every man acceptable, and answereth all things, for an inheritance, and to be received as a wise steward and as a faithful laborer;***
>
> **18** ***Otherwise he shall not be accepted*** of the bishop of Zion.
>
> **19** And now, verily I say unto you, ***let every elder who shall give an account unto the bishop*** of the church in this part of the vineyard ***be recommended by the church*** or churches, in which he labors, ***that he may render himself and his accounts approved in all things.***
>
> **22** That they also may render themselves approved in all things, and be accounted as ***wise stewards.***
>
> **24** ***A few words in addition to the laws of the kingdom, respecting the members of the church—they that are appointed by the Holy Spirit to go up unto Zion, and they who are privileged to go up unto Zion—***
>
> **25** ***Let them carry up unto the bishop a certificate from three elders of the church, or a certificate from the bishop;***
>
> **26** ***Otherwise he who shall go up unto the land of Zion shall not be accounted as a wise steward. This is also an ensample. Amen.***

The first to go to New Jerusalem and build it were to be "the rich and the learned, the wise and the noble" (D&C 58:10); the "poor, the lame, and the blind, and the deaf, [were to] come in unto the marriage of the Lamb" ***after*** "the day of the Lord's power" (D&C 58:11). Or in other words, "what shall then answer the messengers of the nations? That the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people ***shall trust in it"*** (2 Nephi 24:32).

**Doctrine and Covenants 63**

> **41** Behold, I, the Lord, will give unto my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., power that he shall be enabled to discern by the Spirit those who shall go up unto the land of Zion, and those of my disciples who shall tarry.

**D&C 58:44–48, 56. Why Were the Saints Commanded Not to All Gather Immediately to the Land of Zion?**

> The time had not yet come, and would not for "many years" (D&C 58:44), for all the Saints to receive their inheritances in Zion. A great deal of work, preparation, and patience is required before Zion can be fully established. The Church had neither the strength nor the means to purchase lands sufficient for all the Saints in Zion. So, before Zion could be established, a great deal of … work needed to be done.
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 122)

**D&C 63. Historical Background**

> On 27 August 1831 Joseph Smith and his party returned to Kirtland, Ohio, from their first trip to Zion, bringing news that the center place of Zion was now known. "When the report spread among the members of the Church that the Lord had revealed definitely where the city New Jerusalem was to be built, naturally there was rejoicing and many expressed the desire to know what they were to do in order to obtain inheritances. ***The Lord has given instruction repeatedly that all who go to Zion shall obey His law—the celestial law on which Zion was to be built. Those who were weak in the faith, or indifferent to the commandments, were warned that they would not be made welcome in that land unless they repented.*** 'Hearken, O ye people, and open your hearts and give ear from afar; and listen, you that call yourselves the people of the Lord, and hear the word of the Lord and his will concerning you.' These are the words by which this revelation is introduced." (Smith, Church History and Modern Revelation, 1:229.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 133)

**D&C 63:24–31. How Is the Land of Zion to Be Obtained?**

> **President Joseph Fielding Smith** explained that land in Zion was to be purchased. "This fact was taught the early members. They were warned against creating antagonism among their neighbors, many of whom were extremely bitter towards the members of the Church. … ***Those who had the privilege of assembling there should not go up to Zion in haste, but gradually. The reason for this advice is apparent, for haste would lead to confusion, unsatisfactory conditions and pestilence, and then, also, it creates consternation and fear in the hearts of their enemies and arouses greater opposition.*** Satan desired to destroy them and in his anger endeavored to stir them up to strife and contention as well as the older settlers in Missouri." (Church History and Modern Revelation, 1:232.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 135)

## The Original Failure

We know what was supposed to have happened. What did happen? What was the original failure? The poor did not trust in Zion. They did not have patience. The rich, then seeing the chaos, stopped sending money.

The **Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual** summarizes this failure thus:

> To manage the number of Saints gathering to Zion, Church leaders required those in Ohio desiring to go to Missouri to obtain a Church-issued certificate before they could migrate and participate in the law of consecration in Missouri. However, many enthusiastic members disregarded the instruction and went to Missouri in large numbers. A Church historian appointed by the Prophet Joseph Smith later wrote, "The church immediately began to gather in Jackson County, and on this subject they became quite enthusiastic. They had been commanded not to go up in haste, nor by flight, but to have all things prepared before them. Money was to be sent up to the bishop, and as fast as lands were purchased, and preparations made, the bishop was to let it be known, that the church might be gathered in. But this regulation was not attended to, for the church got crazy to go up to Zion, as it was then called. The rich were afraid to send up their money to purchase lands, and the poor crowded up in numbers, without having any places provided, contrary to the advice of the bishop and others, until the old citizens began to be highly displeased" (John Corrill, A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints [1839], 18–19, josephsmithpapers.org; see also The Joseph Smith Papers, Histories, Volume 2: Assigned Histories, 1831–1847, ed. Karen Lynn Davidson and others [2012], 146).
>
> ("Doctrine and Covenants 63:24–31,41. 'They should assemble themselves together unto the land of Zion, not in haste,'" *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual,* 2018)

This failure is what drove the Saints from Missouri, and that generation lost the privilege of building New Jerusalem.

**President Ezra Taft Benson** further clarified this failure in his now-famous talk "Beware of Pride."

> Pride is a sin that can readily be seen in others but is rarely admitted in ourselves. Most of us consider pride to be a sin of those on the top, such as the rich and the learned, looking down at the rest of us. (See 2 Ne. 9:42.) ***There is, however, a far more common ailment among us—and that is pride from the bottom looking up.*** It is manifest in so many ways, such as faultfinding, gossiping, backbiting, murmuring, living beyond our means, envying, coveting, withholding gratitude and praise that might lift another, and being unforgiving and jealous.
>
> My dear brethren and sisters, we must prepare to redeem Zion. It was essentially the sin of pride that kept us from establishing Zion in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith. It was the same sin of pride that brought consecration to an end among the Nephites. (See 4 Ne. 1:24–25.)
>
> Pride is the great stumbling block to Zion. I repeat: Pride is the great stumbling block to Zion.
>
> ("Beware of Pride," General Conference, April 1989)

**Joseph Smith**'s error was not turning away the foolish uncertified virgins from Zion.

### The Righteous Suffer with the Guilty

> When I contemplate upon all things that have been manifested, I am aware that I ought not to murmur, and do not murmur, only in this, that those who are innocent are compelled to suffer for the iniquities of the guilty; and I cannot account for this, only on this wise, that the saying of the Savior has not been strictly observed: "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; or if thy right arm offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee." Now the fact is, if any of the members of our body is disordered, the rest of our body will be affected with it, and then all are brought into bondage together.
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 34–35)

The **Old Testament Student Manual** provides this quote about preparedness:

> "For the disciples to suppose that they can come to this land without ought to eat, or to drink, or to wear, or anything to purchase these necessaries with, is a vain thought. For them to suppose that the Lord will open the windows of heaven, and rain down angel's food for them by the way, when their whole journey lies through a fertile country, stored with the blessings of life from His own hand for them to subsist upon, is also vain. For them to suppose that their clothes and shoes will not wear out upon the journey, when the whole of it lies through a country where there are thousands of sheep from which wool in abundance can be procured to make them garments, and cattle upon a thousand hills, to afford leather for shoes, is just as vain. …
>
> "… Do not conclude from these remarks, brethren, that we doubt in the least, that the Lord will provide for His Saints in these last days; or think

> that we would extend our hands to steady the ark; for this is not the case. We know that the Saints have the unchangeable word of God that they shall be provided for; yet we know, if any are imprudent, or lavish, or negligent, or indolent, in taking that proper care, and making that proper use of what the Lord has made them stewards over, they are not counted wise; for a strict account of every one's stewardship is required, not only in time, but will be in eternity. Neither do we apprehend that we shall be considered putting out our hands to steady the ark of God by giving advice to our brethren upon important points relative to their coming to Zion, when the experience of almost two years' gathering, has taught us to revere that sacred word from heaven, 'Let not your flight be in haste, but let all things be prepared before you.'" (History of the Church, 1:382–83.)
>
> ("The Gathering of Israel and the Coming of the Messiah (Isaiah 48–54)," *Old Testament Student Manual* (Third edition, 2003), pp. 196–197)

Knowing the original failure of the building of New Jerusalem will help us to be able to understand why the Lord in the parable of the ten virgins has to forcibly deny the five foolish virgins when Zion is redeemed and built.

## Back to the Parable

To quickly summarize the parable of the ten virgins: active endowed members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are represented as ten virgins. Five of the virgins were wise and were prepared, whereas five were foolish and did not prepare but expected oil to be provided for them. When the admittance process began, those virgins were revealed, and the foolish virgins, now realizing that oil was a requirement, ask the wise for some of theirs. The wise virgins deny the request, knowing that either a) such a transaction would make themselves unworthy, b) there wasn't enough to share, or c) all of the above. The wise tell the foolish to go to the market and take care of their own oil. The wise proceed; the foolish rush to get oil. The foolish show up again, but the door is shut and the Savior says, "ye know me not" (JST Matt. 25:11).

To summarize the events of the original building of New Jerusalem: members of the Church were told to get certificates (one dealt with spiritual salvation and the other dealt with temporal salvation) from their bishop, who would reveal the members' worthiness. Both certificates were required to get into Zion. While the wise were getting their certificates, the foolish rushed to Jackson County, asking for their temporal salvation to be provided for them. The wise, seeing the problem, halted their progress to go. This caused a collapse of the entire program.

Can we not see the similarities and differences between these two? The parable of the ten virgins is the success story, whereas our past is the failure story. Understanding this, can we not clearly see what the oil represents? What makes the five virgins faithful and wise?

## Who is Faithful and Wise?

**Doctrine and Covenants 72**

> **4** For he who is faithful and wise in time is accounted worthy to inherit the mansions prepared for him of my Father.

**The Church manual** answers "who is faithful and wise?"

> The scriptures teach that the station and rewards we inherit in the life after this are determined by how firmly we commit ourself to the gospel, seek the power of the Atonement to overcome our sins, and take responsibility for our stewardship over temporal blessings. …
>
> The Savior said, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. … If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" (Luke 16:8, 11). **Elder James E. Talmage** explained:
>
> "… Worldly minded men do not neglect provision for their future years, and often are sinfully eager to amass plenty; while the 'children of light,' or those who believe spiritual wealth to be above all earthly possessions, are less energetic, prudent, or ***wise.*** By 'mammon of unrighteousness' we may understand material wealth or worldly things. While far inferior to the treasures of heaven, money or that which it represents may be the means of accomplishing good, and of furthering the purposes of God. Our Lord's admonition was to utilize 'mammon' in good works, while it lasted, for some day it shall fail, and only the results achieved through its use shall endure. If the wicked steward, when cast out from his master's house because of unworthiness, might hope to be received into the homes of those whom he had favored, how much more confidently may they who are genuinely devoted to the right hope to be received into the everlasting mansions of God! Such seems to be part of the lesson.
>
> "… Make such use of your wealth as shall insure you friends hereafter. Be diligent; for the day in which you can use your earthly riches will soon pass. If you have not learned wisdom and prudence in the use of 'unrighteous mammon,' how can you be trusted with the more enduring riches? If you have not learned how to use properly the wealth of another, which has been committed to you as steward, how can you expect to be successful in the handling of great wealth should such be given you as your own? Emulate the unjust steward and the lovers of mammon, not in their dishonesty, cupidity, and miserly hoarding of the wealth that is at best but transitory, but in their zeal, forethought, and provision for the future." (Jesus the Christ, pp. 463–64.)
>
> ("D&C 72:3–4. 'He Who Is Faithful and Wise in Time,'" *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 152)

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are to prepare themselves for the Wedding.

**Doctrine and Covenants 105**

> **9** Therefore, in consequence of the transgressions of my people, it is expedient in me that mine elders should wait for a little season for the redemption of Zion—
>
> **10** That they themselves may be prepared, and that my people may be taught more perfectly, and have experience, and know more perfectly concerning their duty, and the things which I require at their hands.
>
> **11** And this cannot be brought to pass until mine elders are endowed with power from on high.
>
> **12** For behold, I have prepared a great endowment and blessing to be poured out upon them, inasmuch as they are faithful and continue in humility before me.
>
> **13** Therefore it is expedient in me that mine elders should wait for a little season, for the redemption of Zion.

Certain members of the Church, virgins, prepare themselves spiritually, clothing themselves in righteousness, endowments, etc. Half of those virgins neglect their temporal salvation, believing that it will be provided for them. The other half take care to also preserve their temporal salvation, knowing that the days of tribulation, flood, famine will come and that they have been commanded to be ready for it. When these events trigger, the foolish virgins expect or demand a redistribution of wealth, or in other words, "give me of thine oil"; however, this redistribution will be denied on righteous grounds. There won't be enough, and/or such an exchange would make both parties unworthy. The wise virgins, or in other words, "the rich and the learned, the wise and the noble" (D&C 58:10), go into the marriage procession, also known as the redemption of Zion, and begin to build the New Jerusalem. The "poor, the lame, and the blind, and the deaf" are to trust in Zion and wait. The foolish, just like in the original failure, will try to force their way in, but unlike the original failure, the foolish will be forcibly denied entry.

**D&C 42:30–35. What Is the Relationship between the Building of Zion and the Law of Consecration?**

"In this revelation the Law of Consecration is stated definitely as the law on which the New Jerusalem is to be built. This law is given for the benefit of the poor, for the building of Zion and the work of the ministry. … Through this celestial law (Consecration) the Saints are to become the covenant people of the Lord. We cannot enter into the fulness of the covenants pertaining to Zion until we have reached the point where we can live such a divine law. Those who cannot abide the law of tithing cannot partake of this law of consecration, or the higher law and ***they will be deprived of an inheritance when the inheritances are divided."*** (Smith, *Church History and Modern Revelation,* 1:185; see also Enrichment L.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001))

**Doctrine and Covenants 63:1–6. "Listen, you that call yourselves the people of the Lord"**

In earlier revelations the Lord had told the Saints that in order to establish and inhabit Zion they must be a righteous people (see D&C 58:19; 59:1, 3). He opened the revelation recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 63 with a solemn reminder that His commandments are not to be taken lightly and that those who ignore them or rebel against them will be punished. This reminder was necessary because many Church members claimed to be anxious to build Zion but were not obeying God's laws.

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (2018))

**President Benson** said:

Should the Lord decide at this time to cleanse the Church—and the need for that cleansing seems to be increasing—a famine in this land of one year's duration could wipe out a large percentage of slothful members, including some ward and stake officers. Yet we cannot say we have not been warned.

(*Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson,* pp. 265–266)

**Doctrine and Covenants 72**

**3** And verily in this thing ye have done wisely, ***for it is required of the Lord, at the hand of every steward, to render an account of his stewardship, both in time and in eternity.***

…

**5** Verily I say unto you, ***the elders of the church*** in this part of my vineyard ***shall render an account of their stewardship unto the bishop,*** who shall be appointed of me in this part of my vineyard.

**6** ***These things shall be had on record, to be handed over unto the bishop in Zion.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 63**

**47** ***He that is faithful and endureth shall overcome the world.***

**48** ***He that sendeth up treasures unto the land of Zion shall receive an inheritance in this world, and his works shall follow him, and also a reward in the world to come.***

**49** Yea, and blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth, when the Lord shall come, and old things shall pass away, and all things become new, they shall rise from the dead and shall not die after, and ***shall receive an inheritance before the Lord, in the holy city.***

## A Second Witness

**Prepare for the Days of Tribulation**

President Ezra Taft Benson
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

General Conference • October 1980

For over forty years, in a spirit of love, members of the Church have been counseled to be thrifty and self-reliant; to avoid debt; pay tithes and a generous fast offering; be industrious; and have sufficient food, clothing, and fuel on hand to last at least one year.

Today there are compelling reasons to reemphasize this counsel. We heard it done effectively in that great welfare meeting this morning. May I add just a word.

Members of the Church are feeling the economic pinch of higher taxes and inflation coupled with conditions of continuing recession. Some have come to their bishops seeking assistance to pay for house payments, car loans, and utilities.

Unfortunately, there has been fostered in the minds of some an expectation that when we experience hard times, when we have been unwise and extravagant with our resources and have lived beyond our means, we should look to either the Church or government to bail us out. Forgotten by some of our members is an underlying principle of the Church welfare plan that "no true Latter-day Saint will, while physically able, voluntarily shift from himself the burden of his own support" (Marion G. Romney, in Conference Report, Oct. 1973, p. 106).

One of the first principles revealed to father Adam when he was driven out of the Garden of Eden was this: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground" (Gen. 3:19). All we obtain in life of a material nature comes as a product of labor and the providence of God. Work alone produces life's necessities.

In saying this, I am aware of and sympathetic to the plight of many young families who are struggling to make ends meet. They are faced with the financial burden of providing for the three great necessities of life: food, clothing, and shelter. I am also sympathetic to the situation of widows and other sisters who rear families alone. By revelation, the Lord made provision for their care and support. (See D&C 83:1–2, 4–6.)

More than ever before, we need to learn and apply the principles of economic self-reliance. We do not know when the crisis involving sickness or unemployment may affect our own circumstances. We do know that the Lord has decreed global calamities for the future and has warned and forewarned us to be prepared. For this reason the Brethren have repeatedly stressed a "back to basics" program for temporal and spiritual welfare.

Today, I emphasize a most basic principle: home production and storage. Have you ever paused to realize what would happen to your community or nation if transportation were paralyzed or if we had a war or depression? How would you and your neighbors obtain food? How long would the corner grocery store—or supermarket—sustain the needs of the community?

Shortly after World War II, I was called by the First Presidency to go to Europe to reestablish our missions and set up a program for the distribution of food and clothing to the Saints. Vivid in my memory are the people who got on trains each morning with all kinds of bric-a-brac in their arms to go out to the countryside to trade their possessions for food. At evening time, the train station was filled with people with arms full of vegetables and fruits, and a menagerie of squealing pigs and chickens. You never heard such a commotion. These people were, of course, willing to barter practically anything for that commodity which sustains life—food.

An almost forgotten means of economic self-reliance is the home production of food. We are too accustomed to going to stores and purchasing what we need. By producing some of our food we reduce, to a

great extent, the impact of inflation on our money. More importantly, we learn how to produce our own food and involve all family members in a beneficial project. No more timely counsel, I feel, has been given by President Kimball than his repeated emphasis to grow our own gardens. Here is one sample of his emphasis over the past seven years:

"We encourage you to grow all the food that you feasibly can on your own property. Berry bushes, grapevines, fruit trees—plant them if your climate is right for their growth. Grow vegetables and eat them from your own yard." (Ensign, May 1976, p. 124).

Many of you have listened and done as President Kimball counseled, and you have been blessed for it. Others have rationalized that they had no time or space. May I suggest you do what others have done. Get together with others and seek permission to use a vacant lot for a garden, or rent a plot of ground and grow your gardens. Some elders quorums have done this as a quorum, and all who have participated have reaped the benefits of a vegetable and fruit harvest and the blessings of cooperation and family involvement. Many families have dug up lawn space for gardens.

We encourage you to be more self-reliant so that, as the Lord has declared, "notwithstanding the tribulation which shall descend upon you, … the church may stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world" (D&C 78:14). The Lord wants us to be independent and self-reliant because these will be days of tribulation. He has warned and forewarned us of the eventuality.

President Brigham Young said, "If you are without bread, how much wisdom can you boast, and of what real utility are your talents, if you cannot procure for yourselves and save against a day of scarcity those substances designed to sustain your natural lives?" (In Journal of Discourses, 8:68.)

Food production is just one part of the repeated emphasis that you store a provision of food which will last for at least a year wherever it is legally permissible to do so. The Church has not told you what foods should be stored. This decision is left up to individual members. However, some excellent suggestions are available in the booklet produced by the Church entitled "Essentials of Home Production & Storage" (stock no. PGWE1125; 35¢ each). There are also booklets available on gardening from BYU.

From the standpoint of food production, storage, handling, and the Lord's counsel, wheat should have high priority. "There is more salvation and security in wheat," said Orson Hyde years ago, "than in all the political schemes of the world" (in Journal of Discourses, 2:207). Water, of course, is essential. Other basics could include honey or sugar, legumes, milk products or substitutes, and salt or its equivalent. The revelation to produce and store food may be as essential to our temporal welfare today as boarding the ark was to the people in the days of Noah.

Elder Harold B. Lee counseled,

"Perhaps if we think not in terms of a year's supply of what we ordinarily would use, and think more in terms of what it would take to keep us alive in case we didn't have anything else to eat, that last would be very easy to put in storage for a year … just enough to keep us alive if we didn't have anything else to eat. We wouldn't get fat on it, but we would live; and if you think in terms of that kind of annual storage rather than a whole year's supply of everything that you are accustomed to eat which, in most cases, is utterly impossible for the average family, I think we will come nearer to what President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., advised us way back in 1937." (In Welfare Conference, 1 October 1966.)

There are blessings in being close to the soil, in raising your own food even if it is only a garden in your yard and a fruit tree or two. Those families will be fortunate who, in the last days, have an adequate supply of food because of their foresight and ability to produce their own.

The counsel from Church authorities has been consistent over the years and is well summarized in these words:

"First, and above and beyond everything else, let us live righteously. …

"Let us avoid debt as we would avoid a plague; where we are now in debt, let us get out of debt; if not today, then tomorrow.

"Let us straitly and strictly live within our incomes, and save a little.

"Let every head of every household see to it that he has on hand enough food and clothing, and, where possible, fuel also, for at least a year ahead. You of small means put your money in foodstuffs and wearing apparel, not in stocks and bonds; you of large means will think you know how to care for yourselves, but I may venture to suggest that you do not speculate. Let every head of every household aim to own his own home, free from mortgage. Let every man who has a garden spot, garden it; every man who owns a farm, farm it." (President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., in Conference Report, Apr. 1937, p. 26.)

You do not need to go into debt, may I add, to obtain a year's supply. Plan to build up your food supply just as you would a savings account. Save a little for storage each pay-check. Can or bottle fruit and vegetables from your gardens and orchards. Learn how to preserve food through drying and possibly freezing. Make your storage a part of your budget. Store seeds and have sufficient tools on hand to do the job. If you are saving and planning for a second car or a TV set or some item which merely adds to your comfort or pleasure, you may need to change your priorities. We urge you to do this prayerfully and do it now.

I speak with a feeling of great urgency. I have seen what the days of tribulation can do to people. I have seen hunger stalk the streets of Europe. I have witnessed the appalling, emaciated shadows of human figures. I have seen women and children scavenge army garbage dumps for scraps of food. Those scenes and nameless faces cannot be erased from my memory.

I shall never forget the Saints of Hamburg who appeared on the verge of collapse from starvation, or their small children whom I invited to come to the stand as we emptied our pockets of edibles. Most had never seen these items before because of the wartime conditions. Nor can I forget the expectant and nursing mothers whose eyes watered with tears when we gave them each an orange. We saw the terrible physical and social side effects of hunger and malnutrition. One sister walked over a thousand miles with four small children, leaving her home in Poland. She lost all four to starvation and the freezing conditions. Yet she stood before us in her emaciated condition, her clothing shredded, and her feet wrapped in burlap, and bore testimony of how blessed she was.

I cannot forget the French Saints who, unable to obtain bread, used potato peelings for the emblems of the sacrament. Nor will I ever forget the faith of the Dutch Saints who accepted our suggestion to grow potatoes to alleviate their own starving conditions, and then sent a portion of their first harvest to the German people who had been their bitter enemies. The following year they sent them the entire harvest. The annals of Church history have seldom recorded a more Christlike act of love and compassion.

Too often we bask in our comfortable complacency and rationalize that the ravages of war, economic disaster, famine, and earthquake cannot happen here. Those who believe this are either not acquainted with the revelations of the Lord, or they do not believe them. Those who smugly think these calamities will not happen, that they somehow will be set aside because of the righteousness of the Saints, are deceived and will rue the day they harbored such a delusion.

The Lord has warned and forewarned us against a day of great tribulation and given us counsel, through His servants, on how we can be prepared for these difficult times. Have we heeded His counsel?

I bear you my testimony that President Heber J. Grant was inspired of the Lord in establishing the Church Welfare program. The First Presidency was inspired when they made the first public announcement in 1936 and declared the prime purpose of Church welfare was "to help the people help themselves" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1936, p. 3). I bear witness to that inspired counsel from 1936 to the present day that

the Saints lay up a year's supply of food. When President Spencer W. Kimball persistently admonishes the members to plant gardens and fruit trees and produce our own food, he is likewise inspired of the Lord.

Be faithful, my brothers and sisters, to this counsel and you will be blessed—yes, the most blessed people in all the earth. You are good people. I know that. But all of us need to be better than we are. Let us be in a position so we are able to not only feed ourselves through the home production and storage, but others as well.

May God bless us to be prepared for the days which lie ahead, which may be the most severe yet. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

("Prepare for the Days of Tribulation," General Conference, October 1980)

**Food Storage**

Bishop Vaughn J. Featherstone
Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

General Conference • April 1976

Brethren of the priesthood, sisters of the Relief Society, President Henry D. Moyle suggested that when someone speaks we ought to get three things out of the message. First and least important (but still very important), we ought to get what is said. Second, and more important, we ought to have a spiritual experience. Third, and most important, we should keep the commitments we make to ourselves. Let's write them down and follow through. Don't ever make a commitment to yourself you don't intend to keep—if you do, you weaken your character.

For twenty-six years, since I was fifteen, I was involved in the grocery industry. I learned much about human nature during those years. I remember the effects that strikes, earthquakes, and rumors of war had on many very active Latter-day Saints. Like the five foolish virgins, they rushed to the store to buy food, caught in the panic of knowing that direction had been given by the prophet but not having followed that direction—fearful that maybe they had procrastinated until it was everlastingly too late.

It was interesting because only in Latter-day Saint communities did people seem to buy with abandon. It was not a few Latter-day Saints—it was a significant number. It caused great increases in sales. One such experience came when a so-called prophecy by someone outside the Church was greatly publicized.

How foolish we can sometimes be! We have a living prophet; we have God's living oracles, the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles. Let us follow the Brethren and be constant. We need have no fear if we are prepared.

Brothers and sisters, what have we done in our stakes and wards to see that every Latter-day Saint has a year's reserve of food to sustain life? Let's not only keep teaching the principle, but let's also teach our people how.

This morning I would like to discuss food storage. Let me suggest three or four things we can do. Start by taking an inventory—take a physical count of all of your reserves. This would be a great family home evening project if you're prepared. If not, it may be terribly embarrassing to you in front of your family. Imagine how the powerful testimony you bear concerning a living prophet must sound to your children, who know that as a family head you have been counseled for years to have a year's reserve of food on hand. We need to know where we are. Every family should take an inventory—get all the facts.

Second, decide what is needed to bring your present reserve levels to a year's supply. Then make a list and prepare a plan. Consider first, what are the basics?—wheat (or grain from your locale), sugar or honey, dried milk, salt, and water. Most of us can afford such basics. Buy them from your monthly food budget allowance. The Church discourages going into debt to buy for storage.

Now that you know where you are and where you need to be, the third step is to work out a time schedule for when you will reach your goal. I suggest that one year from today we ought to have a year's supply of food in all active—and many inactive—members' homes in the Church. Where food storage violates the law of your land, then abide the law. However, even in those cases we can plant gardens and fruit trees and raise rabbits or chickens. Do all you can within the laws of your community, and the Lord will bless you when the time of need comes. Now here are some suggestions how:

1. Follow the prophet. He has counseled us to plant a garden and fruit trees. This year don't just think about it—do it. Grow all the food you possibly can. Also remember to buy a year's supply of garden seeds so that, in case of a shortage, you will have them for the following spring. I'm going to tell you where to get the money for all the things I'm going to suggest.
2. Find someone who sells large bulk of grains, depending on your locale. Make arrangements to buy a ton or so of grain.
3. Find someone who sells honey in large containers and make arrangements to buy what you can afford on a regular basis or buy a little additional sugar each time you go to the store.
4. Purchase dry milk from the store or dairy, on a systematic basis.
5. Buy a case of salt the next time you go to the store. In most areas, 24 one-pound packages will cost you less than $5.
6. Store enough water for each member of your family to last for at least two weeks.

Where the foods I mentioned are not available or are not basic in your culture or area, make appropriate substitutions.

Now you ask, "Where do I get the money for these things? I agree we need them, but I'm having a hard time making ends meet."

Here is how you do it. Use any one or all of these suggestions, some of which may not be applicable in your country:

1. Decide as a family this year that 25 or 50 percent of your Christmas will be spent on a year's supply. Many families in the Church spend considerable sums of money for Christmas. Half or part of these Christmas monies will go a long way toward purchasing the basics. I recall the Scotsman who went to the doctor and had an X-ray taken of his chest. Then he had the X-ray gift-wrapped and gave it to his wife for their anniversary. He couldn't afford a gift, but he wanted her to know his heart was in the right place. Brethren, give your wife a year's supply of wheat for Christmas, and she'll know your heart is in the right place.
2. When you desire new clothes, don't buy them. Repair and mend and make your present wardrobe last a few months longer. Use that money for the food basics. Make all of your nonfood necessities that you feasibly can, such as furniture and clothing.
3. Cut the amount of money you spend on recreation by 50 percent. Do fun things that do not require money outlay but make more lasting impressions on your children.
4. Decide as a family that there will be no vacation or holiday next year unless you have your year's supply. Many Church members could buy a full year's supply of the basics from what they would save by not taking a vacation. Take the vacation time and work on a family garden. Be together, and it can be just as much fun.
5. If you haven't a year's supply yet and you do have boats, snowmobiles, campers, or other luxury possessions, sell or trade one or two or more of them and get your year's supply.
6. Watch advertised specials in the grocery stores and pick up extra supplies of those items that are of exceptional value.
7. Change the mix in your family's diet. Get your protein from sources less expensive than meat. The grocery bill is one bill that can be cut. Every time you enter the store and feel tempted by effective and honest merchandising to buy cookies, candy, ice cream, non-food items, or magazines—don't! Think carefully; buy only the essentials. Then figure what you have saved and spend it on powdered milk, sugar, honey, salt, or grain.

The Lord will make it possible, if we make a firm commitment, for every Latter-day Saint family to have a year's supply of food reserves by April 1977. All we have to do is to decide, commit to do it, and then keep the commitment. Miracles will take place; the way will be opened, and next April we will have our storage areas filled. We will prove through our actions our willingness to follow our beloved prophet and the Brethren, which will bring security to us and our families.

Now regarding home production: Raise animals where means and local laws permit. Plant fruit trees, grapevines, berry bushes, and vegetables. You will provide food for your family, much of which can be eaten fresh. Other food you grow can be preserved and included as part of your home storage. Wherever possible, produce your nonfood necessities of life. Sew and mend your own clothing. Make or build needed items. I might also add, beautify, repair, and maintain all of your property.

Home production of food and nonfood items is a way to stretch your income and to increase your skills and talents. It is a way to teach your family to be self-sufficient. Our children are provided with much needed opportunities to learn the fundamentals of work, industry, and thrift. President Romney has said, "We will see the day when we will live on what we produce." (*Conference Reports,* April 1975, p. 165.)

I should like to address a few remarks to those who ask, "Do I share with my neighbors who have not followed the counsel? And what about the nonmembers who do not have a year's supply? Do we have to share with them?" No, we don't *have* to share—we *get* to share! Let us not be concerned about silly thoughts of whether we would share or not. Of course we would share! What would Jesus do? I could not possibly eat food and see my neighbors starving. And if you starve to death after sharing, "greater love hath no man than this ..." (John 15:13.)

Now what about those who would plunder and break in and take that which we have stored for our families' needs? Don't give this one more idle thought. There is a God in heaven whom we have obeyed. Do you suppose he would abandon those who have kept his commandments? He said, "If ye are prepared, ye need not fear." (D&C 38:30.) Prepare, O men of Zion, and fear not. Let Zion put on her beautiful garments. Let us put on the full armor of God. Let us be pure in heart, love mercy, be just, and stand in holy places. Commit to have a year's supply of food by April 1977.

Bishops and stake presidents, let us accept the challenge on behalf of the Saints in our wards and stakes. It will prove to be a very Christlike deed on your part. Follow through and check up one year from now and make certain we achieve results.

In his October 1973 conference address, President Ezra Taft Benson gave some excellent instructions about home storage:

"For the righteous the gospel provides a warning before a calamity, a program for the crises, a refuge for each disaster. ...

"The Lord has warned us of famines, but the righteous will have listened to prophets and stored at least a year's supply of survival food. ...

"Brethren and sisters, I know that this welfare program is inspired of God. I have witnessed with my own eyes the ravages of hunger and destitution as, under the direction of the president of the Church, I spent a year in war-torn Europe at the close of World War II, without my family, distributing food, clothing, and bedding to our needy members. I have looked into the sunken eyes of Saints, in almost the last stages of starvation. I have seen faithful mothers carrying their children, three and four years of age, who were unable to walk because of malnutrition. I have seen a hungry woman turn down food for a spool of thread. I have seen grown men weep as they ran their hands through the wheat and beans sent to them from Zion—America.

"Thanks be to God for a prophet, for this inspired program, and for Saints who so managed their stewardship that they could provide for their own and still share with others." ("Prepare Ye," *Ensign,* Jan. 1974, pp. 69, 81–82.)

I bear my humble witness to you that the great God of heaven will open doors and means in a way we never would have supposed to help all those who truly want to get their year's supply. I know we will have time and money if we will commit and keep the commitment. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

("Food Storage," General Conference, April 1976)

**Welfare Services: Past, Present, and Future**

Bishop Victor L. Brown
Presiding Bishop

General Conference • April 1980

... I am afraid some members are laboring under the illusion that in difficult times the Church will take care of them. This is not so. The Church is prepared to take care of a limited number of members for a relatively short period of time.

There should be no misunderstanding on this point. The fundamental principle of welfare services is that *you and I provide for our own needs.* If serious economic disruption were to occur, the Church would do all in its power to alleviate suffering by supplementing member efforts. But it would not be able to do for the Saints what we have been taught to do for ourselves for over forty years—that is, to have a year's supply of food, clothing, and, where possible, fuel; to have savings in reserve; and to possess basic production skills. This counsel has been given at least twice a year for all these years. Some have followed the counsel of the Brethren and are prepared, as were the five wise virgins. Some, like the foolish virgins, do not have enough oil in their lamps. (See Matt. 25:1–13.)

("Welfare Services: Past, Present, and Future," General Conference, April 1980)

**James E. Faust**

The parable of the ten virgins, five wise and five foolish, has both a spiritual and a temporal application. Each of us has a lamp to light the way, but it requires that every one of us put the oil in our own lamps to produce that light. It is not enough to sit idly by and say, "The Lord will provide."

("Responsibility for Welfare Rests with Me and My Family," *Ensign,* May 1986, p. 22)

# Many Are Called; Few Aren't Swept

## The Generation (Jesus)

**Matthew 23**

> **33** Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon ***this generation.***
>
> **34** Ye bear testimony against your fathers, when ye, yourselves, are partakers of the same wickedness.
>
> **35** Behold your fathers did it through ignorance, but ye do not; wherefore, their sins shall be upon your heads.
>
> **36** Then Jesus began to weep over Jerusalem, saying,
>
> **37** O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Ye who will kill the prophets, and will stone them who are sent unto you; how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.
>
> **38** Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

**Joseph Smith—Matthew 1**

> **2** And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple; and his disciples came to him, for to hear him, saying: Master, show us concerning the buildings of the temple, as thou hast said—They shall be thrown down, and left unto you desolate.
>
> **3** And Jesus said unto them: See ye not all these things, and do ye not understand them? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here, upon this temple, one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.
>
> **4** And Jesus left them and went upon the mount of Olives. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying: Tell us, when shall these things be which thou hast said concerning the destruction of the temple, and the Jews;

Jesus told the generation alive ("come upon ***this*** generation") that they would live to see the fulfillment and destruction that he was then prophesying about—that "not one stone would be left." Jesus made this prophecy sometime near his death during his ministry, meaning sometime around 33AD. This prophecy deals with the "abomination of Desolation" spoken of by Daniel, in which Jerusalem would be punished for her wickedness and would be utterly destroyed. There are three things we need to ask ourselves here about this prophecy and it's fulfillment that will be useful when likening things unto us today, for we know that the Lord "is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (1 Nephi 10: 18).

1. What was the sign for "that generation" to look for to know that the prophecy was about to be fulfilled?
2. How literally was the Lord's prophecy fulfilled?
3. What did the Lord define as a generation? I.e., How long did it take for "that generation" to see the fulfillment?

Let's start with the first question.

## The Sign (Jesus)

**Luke 21**

> **19** And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.
>
> **20** Then let them who are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them who are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them who are in the countries return to enter into the city.
>
> **21** For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.
>
> **22** But woe unto them who are with child and to them who give suck in those days! For there shall be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people.
>
> **23** And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.
>
> **24** Now these things he spake unto them concerning the destruction of Jerusalem.

**Joseph Smith—Matthew 1**

> **12** When you, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, then you shall stand in the holy place; whoso readeth let him understand.
>
> **13** Then let them who are in Judea flee into the mountains;
>
> **14** Let him who is on the housetop flee, and not return to take anything out of his house;
>
> **15** Neither let him who is in the field return back to take his clothes;
>
> **16** And wo unto them that are with child, and unto them that give suck in those days;
>
> **17** Therefore, pray ye the Lord that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day;
>
> **18** For then, in those days, shall be great tribulation on the Jews, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, such as was not before sent upon Israel, of God, since the beginning of their kingdom until this time; no, nor ever shall be sent again upon Israel.
>
> **19** All things which have befallen them are only the beginning of the sorrows which shall come upon them.

The sign the Lord gave to "that generation" to know that the prophesied destruction and desolation would take place was "when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies." So "that generation" knew that in its lifetime this prophecy would be fulfilled. The Lord then told that generation that when you see this one sign, this single event, know that the prophecy is about to be fulfilled. So now that we know that, let's answer the second question: "How literally was this fulfilled?"

## The Destruction

**Parley P. Pratt**

> Now, then, comes the thing the Apostles asked about, after he had told them the preliminary leading to it; filling up the interstices of time, he gets at length to the destruction of that temple—to the throwing down of those beautiful stones. "When ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know the desolation thereof is nigh." Does that need any spiritualizing?
>
> Go and read Josephus, read the history of the Roman army under Titus, the Roman general, who came up and laid siege against that city and surrounded it with the Roman legions; and then read the history of the war. It took place at the time when almost the whole nation had poured into that devoted city, just as you have poured into Salt Lake City, only we are a mere handful compared with that great nation; they had come into one of the great Conferences that happened about once a year; it was during the time that tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands that come into Jerusalem, from all the surrounding country, that they were laid siege to by the Roman army.
>
> The city was blockaded—none could escape. Besides this there were several factions within the city; Jews were at war with Jews under dif-

ferent leaders. This made a desolating war within, while the enemy was encamped without; and besides all this, famine overtook them, and pestilence caused by want; and by being crowded and shut up in the city, and by the dead bodies with no place to bury them.

Hence with sword, famine, pestilence, &c., Jerusalem began to be desolated. "Now when you see this, understand that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto."

Some of our Sectarian friends tell us that Jesus Christ did not preach a gathering; he only preached the Gospel, and then let the people live right where they had a mind to. But here is a positive revelation from the Son of God, to those that would give heed to his warning voice, to actually remove to the mountains in order to escape the war, the troubles, and pestilence that awaited the Jews and Jerusalem.

Now if we had all the history of those times; if we only had what the Apostles have written, in full, instead of a little of it, we should have the particular place where they did go, and where they lived, you would have an account of the organization of a gathered people taking care of themselves, while war desolated the nation. We have not got this part of ancient history, but we will have it, for there is nothing secret but what will be revealed—hid but what will be brought to light.

When God sees fit we will have the record of the fulfillment of this gathering; of every man, woman, and child that heeded the warning of the blessed Jesus. About seventy years after the birth of Christ, which was about the date that the Roman army compassed Jerusalem, I warrant you they left Judea and Jerusalem, and gathered into the mountains to take care of themselves. This is the very period of Christian history I would very much like to read—how they conducted themselves when they were gathered together, and how they maintained themselves when their nation and temple were crumbling to the dust.

"Let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the country enter thereinto." We are given to understand that there was a little time after the Roman army had laid siege to Jerusalem, in consequence of a certain movement of that army, that gave a chance to the people in the city that were wide awake, to gather. If they would give heed to the warning voice of Jesus, or to the words of his Apostles, not to come down from the housetop, or stop to get their bed, but run with all their might, they could escape. A little moment of relaxation, an advantageous position of the army, made escape possible to those who would not stop to take their clothes out of the house, their bed, or anything else, but flee at once.

"For these be the days of vengeance." Vengeance on what? On the people of the Jews and on all the people of Jerusalem that had rejected the Gospel, that had rejected and killed the true Messiah, and persecuted and killed the Apostles, and his disciples.

"These be the days of vengeance." What for? That all things that were written may he fulfilled, not spiritualized, nor transformed, nor done away, but absolutely fulfilled.

What did he mean by that saying? Go and read Moses; I shall not trouble myself to give chapter and verse; go and read Moses and the Prophets and see if they do not predict the horrors of war to that age, and desolation, even to the eating of their own children for mere want, because of the pressure of the famine; "even the tender and delicate women," says Moses, "who would not venture to put the soles of their feet on the ground for tenderness and delicacy, should eat their own children in the siege and the straitness, whereby your enemies shall distress you in all your gates, if you will not hearken to my words." He also predicted that the Lord God would raise up a Prophet like unto him, and the people should hear him in all things whatsoever he should say unto them, and every soul that would not hear him, should be cut off from among the people....

"For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people." That is, in the land of Judea, upon the Jews, and in that city...

One thing we know certain, we have no need to conjecture, that is, that all these things happened literally. The Roman army on the outside, and the three factions on the inside of the city of Jerusalem, and the famine, and the pestilence helping it on, performed their work until finally it came to an end by the city being taken by the Romans, the temple set on fire, and burned, and the whole city desolated, and brought under Gentile rule, namely, Roman rule. And it is said, in the history written by Josephus, that one million and a half of Jews perished in that siege, that is, in that one city, in putting an end to a national polity; a national corrupted form of government, a national priesthood, a national house of worship.

One million and a half perished! They fell by the edge of the sword, by pestilence, and by famine, and the remnants of the Jews were carried captive among all nations. To remain how long? As I have said, we know this prophecy has been literally fulfilled, for we see them scattered among all nations to this day...

But about one stone of the temple at Jerusalem not being left one upon another—the fire itself would not do this—but history has informed us that the Jews concealed their treasures under the stones of the temple, and the Roman army went to work, and tumbled them about, and did not leave one stone upon another, and finally they were removed.

In fulfillment of another scripture, they took a plough and ploughed the temple site—so completely was the scripture fulfilled.

Had I time I would quote the chapter and verse of this plowing, and the history which refers to it.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 3, Discourse 19)

From this we learn that the prophecy of Christ was very literally fulfilled and that the destruction to the Jewish people was almost incalculable. To answer the last question then: "How long was a generation," or rather, "How long was it from the prophecy to its fulfillment"? It was from 33AD to 70AD, a time period of 37 years! So the Lord clearly was referring to a very literal generation of men! If the Lord was speaking to the generation as a midpoint, that would mean "the generation" was around 74 years, which still today floats around the average life expectancy. Meaning, for the prophecy to include the majority of those Christ was speaking about, we'd have to expand the life expectancy out to 74 years. If the prophecy was given not to the middle, but rather at the beginning, it would have read something like, "when you see Christ's birth... that generation (meaning those born at that same time) will not all pass before they see Jerusalem compassed about." Christ, however, was giving the prophecy to the generation already there, so he said, "this generation... will not all pass before they see Jerusalem compassed about." Understanding this difference is important to moving forward.

## Multiple Fufillments

**Abomination of Desolation**

Daniel spoke prophetically of a day when there would be "the abomination that maketh desolate" (Dan. 11:31; 12:11), and the phrase was recoined in New Testament times to say "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet" (Matt. 24:15).

Conditions of desolation, born of abomination and wickedness, were to occur twice in fulfillment of Daniel's words. The first was to be when the Roman legions under Titus, in A.D. 70, laid siege to Jerusalem (Matt. 24:15; JS—M 1:12).

Speaking of the last days, of the days following the Restoration of the gospel and its declaration "for a witness unto all nations," our Lord said: "And again shall the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, be fulfilled" (JS—M 1:31–32). That is, Jerusalem again will be under siege.

> In a general sense, abomination of desolation also describes the latter-day judgments to be poured out upon the wicked wherever they may be. And so that the honest in heart may escape these things, the Lord sends His servants forth to raise the warning voice, to declare the glad tidings of the Restoration, lest "desolation and utter abolishment" come upon them. The elders are commanded to reprove "the world in righteousness of all their unrighteous and ungodly deeds, setting forth clearly and understandingly the desolation of abomination in the last days" (D&C 84:114, 117; 88:84–85).
>
> ("Abomination of Desolation," Bible Dictionary)

This prophecy saw a fulfillment with the time of Jesus, but it will see another fulfillment in our day, and the keys around both prophecies are exactly the same. In the first prophecy, Christ identified a generation and then gave a sign to look for in the lifespan of that generation to know that the fulfillment of the Abomination of Desolation would be fulfilled shortly. So answering the same questions from above again:

1. What is the generation and how do we identify it?
2. What is the sign for that generation to look for to know it is wrapping up?
3. How literally will the prophecies be fulfilled?

Let's start with the first, which was already gone over in great detail in the first chapter of Section I: A Sense of Urgency, "The Generation," but let's do a quick recap on that generation—the generation in which the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

## The Generation (Today)

**Parley P. Pratt**

> And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and they shall be led away captive among all nations: and Jerusalem" —what will become of it finally?—"shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until" —that is a big word, and means much in the position it occupies here—"UNTIL" —on that word is suspended that nation's fate, and the fate of all the neighboring nations—"Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."
>
> I tell you there is meaning in these words, contained in that single line. O ye nations of the earth, if I had the voice of an angel's trump, that I could be heard to earth's remotest bounds, by kings, rulers, captains, generals, armies, and nations, I would wish to read that one line in their ears, and tell them the things that are summed up in it.
>
> "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." What is meant by it?...
>
> Now then this last line I have read has been fulfilling until now; that is certain. The Jews are among all nations, in captivity—without being organized and nationalized; without being restored; without having returned to the God of their fathers; to His matchless power; to the administration of His Holy Spirit; to the enjoyment of heavenly communication, through Holy Prophets, by the revelations of God; to the administration of angels; to the enjoyment of the religion of their fathers, and to the power of God to defend them, and deliver them from their enemies.
>
> They have been 1,800 years without these blessings. This is a fact foretold in this chapter, and literally fulfilled before the eyes of all men. All the nations know it that know anything about the Bible or about history.
>
> Now there was a time allotted for the Gentile powers to reign, for their corruptions to bear rule, and during the time here designated as the times of the Gentiles, the times of their polity, of their nationality, their religion, and to prove them and to see what they would do with the power committed unto them—the times spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, in which the fourth monarchy, namely, the Roman, and all those divisions, and subdivisions that should grow out of it in modern times, the times when these divided powers should bear rule.
>
> There is just as much a time for these to have their day and prove themselves, and bring forth the fruits of their rule, and a time for them to come to an end, as ever there was a time for Jerusalem to rule or for the Jewish polity to come to an end. Now when that time arrives, ye nations look out, for there is a prophecy gone forth about you; it is in these words, and recorded in the Old Testament: "Though I make a full end of all nations where I have scattered you, yet will I not make a full end of you," speaking of Israel.
>
> Now, when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled there will be an uprooting of their governments and institutions, and of their civil, political, and religious polity. There will be a shaking of nations, a downfall of empires, an upturning of thrones and dominions, as Daniel has foretold, and the kingdom and power, and rule on the earth will return to another people, and exist under another polity, as Daniel has further foretold. But let me read it here, let Jesus speak in his own words, or the writer for him. Now understand that we have got down to the present time, that is sure with this prophecy, no man can mistake it. Jerusalem has been overthrown, and not one stone of that magnificent temple has been left upon another. A great portion of that nation fell by the edge of the sword, and the residue went captive among all nations, and their city has been trodden under foot of the Gentiles, and will be until their times are fulfilled, that is, until they have had their reign out. Then what will happen? We will read; "And there shall be signs in the sun." Has anybody seen them?—not away back among those other things; there were signs in the air then; Josephus tells you about it, and this book tells you about it, as I have been reading today in this chapter, about the signs which happened as a forerunner of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the Jews as a nation. Now after the Jews have remained among the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, as a forerunner of this latter overturn, "there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon." Have any of you seen them during the last 30 years? I have. "And in the stars." Have you seen any signs in the stars? Think back for the last 30 years. "And upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And THEN" —not some other time. Are there any Millerites here who have been setting a time for the Son of Man to come? "Then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Not you, my disciples, whom I told a little while ago should be delivered up to the synagogues, and to prisons, and be beheaded, and suffer many things; not you whom I have warned to take heed lest you are deceived by false Christs that shall come to you; and when you should hear of wars and commotions to be not terrified, &c.; but Jesus Christ now directs his attention to another age; this does not refer to you my followers, you will be dead, and in paradise when these things that I now refer to shall take place. But THEY. Who? The people who shall live when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled—when their reign is about to come to an end, the generation that will be alive when Jerusalem and the Jews are about to be restored, and the full end of all Gentile polity is about to usher in. "Then shall they see," those that shall live in those days. And what shall they see? "The Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 3, Discourse 19)

**D&C 45:30–31. Why Is the Fulfilling of the Times of the Gentiles So Significant?**

> The fulfilling or closing out of the times of the Gentiles is one of the great signs given by the Savior in answer to the question of the disciples, "What is the sign of thy coming?" (JS—M 1:4). Doctrine and Covenants 45:31 shows its great significance: "There shall be men standing in that generation [in which the times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled] that shall not pass." That language is almost identical with the Savior's

warning to the Jews, as he recounts in verse 21, and the fulfillment will be just as sure (see Notes and Commentary for D&C 45:21).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 95)

**D&C 45:24–30. What Are the "Times of the Gentiles" and When Are They Fulfilled?**

Jerusalem will no longer be "trodden down of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24). Again President Smith explained: "When we consider the words of the Savior to his disciples, that the Jews should be scattered and 'Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled,' we have a fair understanding of the meaning of this … verse [D&C 45:30] in this revelation. Jerusalem ***was trodden down of the Gentiles*** from the day of its destruction ***until the close of the year 1917,*** when it was freed from Turkish rule by General Edmund H. Allenby of the British forces. After the war Palestine became a British mandate, and Great Britain by proclamation declared that country to be a refuge for the Jews, who were invited to return. … It is very significant, however, that ***Jerusalem is no longer trodden down by the Gentiles*** and the Jews are again gathering there. ***This is the sign given by our Lord, for the end of the times of the Gentiles.*** We are now in the transition period and shortly the day of the Jew will dawn and the Gospel will be taken to them and to the remnants on this land." (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 1:196–97.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 94)

The times of the Gentiles was fulfilled between 1917–1967, marking the generation in which the times of the Gentiles was fulfilled. Now that we have that generation identified, and using the 74 year mark from earlier, what can we glean? That the fulfillment of the second Abomination of Desolation will take place ***no later than*** 1991–2041. Interestingly enough, The Family: A Proclamation to the World came out in 1995 and it contained in it, "Further we warn that the disintegration of the family [will bring about the second Abomination of Desolation]." That aside, the next question then becomes "what was the major sign given to this generation to know that the second Abomination of Desolation was about to be fulfilled?"

## The Sign (Today)

**Luke 21**

**29** And he spake to them a parable, saying, Behold the fig tree and all the trees.

**30** When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.

**31** So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

**32** Verily, I say unto you, ***This generation, the generation when the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, shall not pass away till all be fulfilled.***

**33** Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

We went over this parable in a previous chapter. Once again, this parable dealt with identifying "the generation in which the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." The important part to pick up here is the Lord promising that "the generation when the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, shall not pass away till all be fulfilled."

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

**30** And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

**31** ***And there shall be men standing in that generation, that shall not pass until they shall see an overflowing scourge; for [because] a desolating sickness shall cover the land.***

**32** But my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die.

**33** And there shall be earthquakes also in divers places, and many desolations; yet men will harden their hearts against me, and they will take up the sword, one against another, and they will kill one another.

We will get to verses 32–33 later on in this chapter, but it is important to include them here as points of reference to clearly identify the time period we are in. Here, we are talking about the generation in which the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled; it then mentions the sign that generation should look for as the indicator before the scourge: "a desolating sickness." The sign to look for in Jesus's time was "Jerusalem compassed by armies," which, when they saw, they knew the "scourge," i.e., "the Abomination of Desolation," was near at hand. Here, in Doctrine and Covenants 45, the Lord gives the key, the event, for the generation in which the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled to look for: "a desolating sickness." When the generation in which the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled sees the desolating sickness, they can know that the scourge is nigh at hand.

They will also know that there will be events tied to the desolating sickness that will cause some people to "lift up their voices and curse God and die" and others to "stand in holy places and be not moved."

## We Live in That Day

**President Russell M. Nelson**

We invite you to be a major part of sharing the message of the ongoing Restoration of the Savior's gospel. We will share more about this soon, but you can start today by acting on the invitations I extended to you at last general conference to immerse yourself in the glorious light of the Restoration.

"… You may wish to begin your preparation by reading afresh Joseph Smith's account of the First Vision as recorded in the Pearl of Great Price. Or ponder important questions such as 'How would my life be different if my knowledge gained from the Book of Mormon were suddenly taken away?' or 'How have the events that followed the First Vision made a difference for me and my loved ones?'

"Select your own questions. Design your own plan. Act on any of these invitations to prepare yourself for sharing the important messages of the ongoing Restoration. … It is your personal preparation that will help April's general conference become for you not only memorable but unforgettable. The time to act is now. This is a hinge point in the history of the Church, and your part is vital.

(*Church News,* January 2, 2020)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

Now, as President of His Church, I plead with you who have distanced yourselves from the Church and with you who have not yet really sought to know that the Savior's Church has been restored. Do the spiritual work to find out for yourselves, and please do it now. ***Time is running out.***

("Come, Follow Me," General Conference, April 2019)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

"The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord ***will be separated from those who do*** (see Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7). Our safest insurance is to continue to be worthy of admission to His holy house. The greatest gift you could give to the Lord is to keep yourself unspotted from the world, worthy to attend His holy house. His gift to you will be the peace and security of knowing that you are worthy to meet Him, whenever that time comes.

("The Future of the Church," *Ensign,* April 2020)

**Doctrine and Covenants 1**

**14** And the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, ***shall be cut off from among the people;***

**President Russell M. Nelson**

We have front-row seats to witness live what the prophet Nephi saw only in vision, that "the power of the Lamb of God" would descend "upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory."

***You, my brothers and sisters, are among those men, women, and children whom Nephi saw. Think of that!***

Regardless of where you live or what your circumstances are, the Lord Jesus Christ is your Savior, and God's prophet Joseph Smith is your prophet. He was foreordained before the foundation of the earth to be the prophet of this last dispensation, when "nothing shall be withheld" from the Saints. Revelation continues to flow from the Lord during this ongoing process of restoration.

("Hear Him," General Conference, April 2020)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

As you study your scriptures during the next six months, I encourage you to make a list of all that the Lord has promised He will do for covenant Israel. I think you will be astounded! Ponder these promises. Talk about them with your family and friends. ***Then live and watch for these promises to be fulfilled in your own life.***

("Let God Prevail," General Conference, October 2020)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

Lesson 1: The Home Is the Center of Faith and Worship

Often when the Lord warns us about the perils of the last days, He counsels thus: "Stand ye in holy places, and be not moved."[2] These "holy places" certainly include the Lord's temples and meetinghouses. ***But as our ability to gather in these places has been restricted in varying degrees,*** we have learned that one of the holiest of places on earth is the home—yes, even your home."

**Footnote 2**

Doctrine and Covenants 87:8; see also Matthew 24:15; Doctrine and Covenants 45:31–33; 101:21–22.

**Doctrine and Covenants 45:31–33**

**31** And there shall be men standing in that generation, that shall not pass until they shall see an overflowing scourge; for a desolating sickness shall cover the land.

**32** But my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die.

**33** And there shall be earthquakes also in divers places, and many desolations; yet men will harden their hearts against me, and they will take up the sword, one against another, and they will kill one another.

**Matthew 24:15**

**15** When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

("What We Are Learning and Will Never Forget," G.C., April 2021)

The definition of *desolate* is:

**Adjective:**
**1 :** devoid of inhabitants and visitors : deserted e.g. a desolate abandoned town
**2 :** joyless, disconsolate, and sorrowful through or as if through separation from a loved one e.g. a desolate widow
**3 a :** showing the effects of abandonment and neglect : dilapidated e.g. a desolate old house
**b :** barren, lifeless e.g. a desolate landscape
**c :** devoid of warmth, comfort, or hope : gloomy e.g. desolate memories

**Verb:**
**a :** to deprive of inhabitants e.g. The neighboring town was desolated.
**b :** to lay waste e.g. desolating the city with bombs
**c :** forsake e.g. their desolated families back home
**d :** to make wretched

Now that we know we live in these days and that (at least according to President Nelson) COVID-19 was/is the "desolating sickness," let us not see if we can identify the prophesied sifting, or in other words, "those lifting up their voices to curse God and die" vs. "those standing in holy places."

## Curse God and Die

**Doctrine and Covenants 121**

**16** ***Cursed*** are all those that shall ***lift up*** the heel against mine anointed, saith the Lord, and ***cry*** they have sinned when they have not sinned before me, saith the Lord, but have done that which was meet in mine eyes, and which I commanded them.

**17** But those who cry transgression do it because they are the servants of sin, and are the children of disobedience themselves.

**18** And those who swear falsely against my servants, that ***they might bring them into bondage and death—***

**19** Wo unto them; because they have offended my little ones ***they shall be severed from the ordinances of mine house.***

**20** Their basket shall not be full, their houses and their barns shall perish, and ***they themselves shall be despised by those that flattered them.***

**21** They shall not have right to the priesthood, nor their posterity after them from generation to generation.

**22** ***It had been better for them that a millstone had been hanged about their necks, and they drowned in the depth of the sea.***

**23** Wo unto all those that discomfort my people, and drive, and murder, and testify against them, saith the Lord of Hosts; a generation of vipers shall not escape the damnation of hell.

**24** Behold, ***mine eyes see and know all their works,*** and I have in reserve a ***swift judgment*** in the season thereof, for them all;

**25** For there is a time appointed for every man, according as his works shall be.

**2 Nephi 28**

**8** And there shall also be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry; nevertheless, fear God—he will justify in committing a little sin; yea, lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this; and do all these things, for tomorrow we die; and if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God.

**9** Yea, and there shall be many which shall ***teach after this manner, false and vain and foolish doctrines*** and shall be puffed up in their hearts, and shall seek deep to hide their counsels from the Lord; and their works shall be in the dark.

**10** And the blood of the saints shall cry from the ground against them.

**11** Yea, they have all gone out of the way; they have become corrupted.

**12** Because of pride, and because of false teachers, and false doctrine, their churches have become corrupted, and their churches are lifted up; because of pride they are puffed up.

**13** They rob the poor because of their fine sanctuaries; they rob the poor because of their fine clothing; and they persecute the meek and the poor in heart, because in their pride they are puffed up.

**14** They wear stiff necks and high heads; yea, and because of pride, and wickedness, and abominations, and whoredoms, they have all gone astray save it be a few, who are the humble followers of Christ; nevertheless, they are led, that in many instances they do err ***because they are taught by the precepts of men.***

**Hosea 4**

**6** ¶ My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. ...

**12** ¶ My people ask counsel at their stocks, and their staff declareth unto them: for the spirit of whoredoms hath caused them to err, and they have gone a whoring from under their God.

**Hosea 4:12. What Are Stocks and Staffs?**

The stocks were wooden idols. The staffs were divining rods, instruments used to foretell the future, to find lost or hidden objects, and so forth. All were consulted within the Canaanite culture much like divining instruments are used in today's Satanic cults. Thus, instead of seeking counsel from the living God, they looked to the idols.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 107)

**Matthew 18:5–10. A Warning Not to Offend Little Ones**

Though Jesus was speaking to leaders of His day when He issued a stern warning not to offend little ones, the message recorded in Matthew 18:5–10 applies to all of us (see D&C 50:40–41 for a broader definition of "little children"). We must not cause anyone seeking greater understanding of the gospel plan to stumble in their faith, nor should we do anything to block their progress toward eternal life. Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught about this warning:

"Few crimes are as gross and wicked as that of teaching false doctrine and leading souls away from God and salvation. ... If eternal joy is the reward given those who teach the truth and bring souls to salvation, shall not those who teach false doctrines and lead souls to damnation receive as their reward eternal remorse? (D. & C. 18:10–16.)

"... ***It is better to die and be denied the blessings of continued mortal existence than to live and lead souls from the truth, thereby gaining eternal damnation for oneself"*** (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 1:420).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

DO NOT BETRAY THE BRETHREN

O ye Twelve! and all Saints! profit by this important Key—that in all your trials, troubles, temptations, afflictions, bonds, imprisonments and death, see to it, that you do not betray heaven; that you do not betray Jesus Christ; ***that you do not betray the brethren;*** that you do not betray the revelations of God, whether in Bible, Book of Mormon, or Doctrine and Covenants, or any other that ever was or ever will be given and revealed unto man in this world or that which is to come. Yea, in all your kicking and flounderings, see to it that you do not this thing, lest innocent blood be found upon your skirts, and you go down to hell. All other sins are not to be compared to sinning against the Holy Ghost, ***and proving a traitor to the brethren.***

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 156)

**2 Nephi 27**

**24** And again it shall come to pass that the Lord shall say unto him that shall read the words that shall be delivered him:

**25** Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men—

**26** Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, ***for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.***

**27** ***And wo unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord! And their works are in the dark; and they say: Who seeth us, and who knoweth us?*** And they also say: Surely, your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay. But behold, I will show unto them, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I know all their works. For shall the work say of him that made it, he made me not? Or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, he had no understanding?

**Isaiah 28**

**14** Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem.

**15** Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with ***death,*** and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:

**16** Therefore, thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste.

**17** Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall ***sweep*** away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.

**18** And ***your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.***

**3 Nephi 24**

**14** Ye have said: It is vain to serve God, and what doth it profit that we have kept his ordinances and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts?

**15** And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.

**D&C 45**

**27** And the love of men shall wax cold, and iniquity shall abound. ...

**33** ... yet men will harden their hearts against me ...

**Doctrine & Covenants 45:27. What Will Cause the Love of Men to Wax Cold?**

"The expression is the same as that found in Matt. 24:12, where we read (translated literally), 'And because lawlessness has abounded, the love of the many [this indicates more than a few] shall wax cold.' 'Love' here means Christian unity, harmony. ..." (Smith and Sjodahl, Commentary, p. 262.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 95)

We learn here, simply and plainly, that to "lift up one's voice, curse God, and die spiritually" is to cry against the Lord's anointed, to preach against following the counsel and commands of the keys. We also learn that to betray the brethren is on par with sinning against the Holy

Ghost—***"It is better to die and be denied the blessings of continued mortal existence than to live and lead souls from the truth, thereby gaining eternal damnation for oneself."*** There will be those "teaching after the precepts of men" and denying these truths, and their reward will be eternal damnation.

Next, the Lord goes into another thing being made desolate: "the courage of men," i.e., "men's hearts failing them." In what, or how, do men's hearts fail them? Only when they fail to let God prevail, and the act of not letting God prevail is an act of pride. We prevail with God when we build upon Him and His rock. When we harden our hearts against Him, it is when we choose our own way versus the Lord's way. This is the point of reference that we are in right now. Will you let God prevail? Will you give the Lord your heart of stone so that He may place in you a heart of flesh? (Ezekiel 36:26) Or will you harden your hearts? Did we go to the philosophies and opinions of men? Did we decide to shorten the arm of the Lord and spiritualize and make figurative His word? That is where we are now.

We learn that what is causing the love of man to wax cold is the molestation of the law. The laws of the land are being trampled, that destruction is causing the love of man to wax cold, and that is causing people to lift up their heel against the Lord's anointed and curse God and die spiritually.

Have we not seen this literally and plainly take place since COVID-19?

So then, who are the other people, the other side of the sifting, those "standing in holy places," and what does that look like?

## Stand in Holy Places

President Nelson committed us to "study all the promises to the House of Israel" but then didn't follow up on it the following conference… or did he? I believe he did!

**D&C 45:32. Stand in Holy Places**

> President Harold B. Lee stated:
>
> "… Where is safety? …
>
> ***"As one studies the Lord's commands and attending promises upon compliance therewith,*** one gets some definite ideas as to how we might 'stand in holy places,' as the Lord commands—if we will be preserved with such protection as accords with his holy purposes, in order that we might be numbered among the 'pure in heart' who [shall] constitute Zion, as I have read from the Lord's own words." (In Conference Report, Oct. 1968, pp. 61–62.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 95)

If we studied "the promises made to the House of Israel" as President Nelson committed us to, we would have learned "where to stand in Holy places," and hopefully started the process of making ourselves numbered among those worthy for the New Jerusalem (Zion). President Nelson, in the very next conference (after giving the commitment), covered heavily "standing in Holy places"—the answer or follow up to "studying the promises made to the House of Israel."

So, what does it mean to "stand in holy places"?

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> Current adjustments in temple procedures, and others that will follow, are continuing evidence that the Lord is actively directing His Church. He is providing opportunities for each of us to bolster ***our spiritual foundations more effectively by centering our lives on Him and on the ordinances and covenants of His temple.*** When you bring your temple recommend, a contrite heart, and a seeking mind to the Lord's house of learning, He will teach you.
>
> ("The Temple and Your Spiritual Foundation," G.C., October 2021)

**Doctrine and Covenants 43**

> **24** O, ye nations of the earth, how often would I have gathered you together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!
>
> **25** How oft have I called upon you ***by the mouth of my servants,*** and by the ministering of angels, and by mine own voice, and by the voice of thunderings, and by the voice of lightnings, and by the voice of tempests, and by the voice of earthquakes, and great hailstorms, and by the voice of famines and pestilences of every kind, and by the great sound of a trump, and by the voice of judgment, and by the voice of mercy all the day long, and by the voice of glory and honor and the riches of eternal life, and would have saved you with an everlasting salvation, but ye would not!

**2 Nephi 28**

> **32** Wo be unto the Gentiles, saith the Lord God of Hosts! For notwithstanding I shall lengthen out mine arm unto them from day to day, they will deny me; nevertheless, I will be merciful unto them, saith the Lord God, if they will repent and come unto me; for mine arm is lengthened out all the day long, saith the Lord God of Hosts.

**Doctrine and Covenants 124**

> **45** And if my people will hearken unto my voice, and unto the voice of my servants whom I have appointed to lead my people, behold, verily I say unto you, ***they shall not be moved out of their place.***
>
> **46** But if they will not hearken to my voice, nor unto the voice of these men whom I have appointed, they shall not be blest, because they pollute mine holy grounds, and mine holy ordinances, and charters, and my holy words which I give unto them.

**Doctrine and Covenants 1**

> **38** What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.

**Amos 3**

> **7** Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets

**3 Nephi 24**

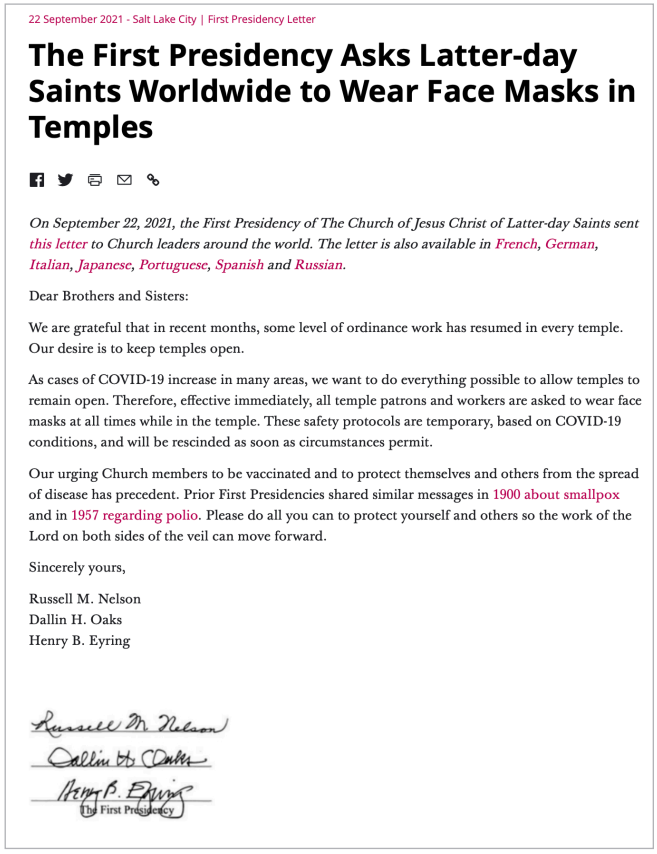
> **16** Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.
>
> **17** And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.
>
> **18** Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

Thus we see that molesting the laws of the land causes the love of man to wax cold, yea they are lifting up their voices (on YouTube, Facebook, Social Media, etc.), cursing God and dying, while the righteous are standing in holy places. And here it is better explained as pockets of Saints preaching the word of God and teaching to fear the Lord according to the Lord's precepts, not man's. The Lord then describes in verse 16 and 17 that this is a large part of the test, or requirement, for the New Jerusalem.

One might ask, "can we think of a counsel/command/urging/etc. that came from the prophets that tied directly to the desolating sickness and caused people to lift up their heel against the Lord's anointed, to curse God and die spiritually and kick against the pricks, because their hearts were hardened because the laws of the land were being trampled?" Did

anything like that take place within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?

## The Call (By the Voice of My Servants)



22 September 2021 - Salt Lake City | First Presidency Letter

**The First Presidency Asks Latter-day Saints Worldwide to Wear Face Masks in Temples**

*On September 22, 2021, the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sent this letter to Church leaders around the world. The letter is also available in French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish and Russian.*

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

We are grateful that in recent months, some level of ordinance work has resumed in every temple. Our desire is to keep temples open.

As cases of COVID-19 increase in many areas, we want to do everything possible to allow temples to remain open. Therefore, effective immediately, all temple patrons and workers are asked to wear face masks at all times while in the temple. These safety protocols are temporary, based on COVID-19 conditions, and will be rescinded as soon as circumstances permit.

Our urging Church members to be vaccinated and to protect themselves and others from the spread of disease has precedent. Prior First Presidencies shared similar messages in 1900 about smallpox and in 1957 regarding polio. Please do all you can to protect yourself and others so the work of the Lord on both sides of the veil can move forward.

Sincerely yours,

Russell M. Nelson
Dallin H. Oaks
Henry B. Eyring

The First Presidency

**Letter From the First Presidency**

> Dear Brothers and Sisters:
>
> We find ourselves fighting a war against the ravages of COVID-19 and its variants, an unrelenting pandemic. ***We want to do all we can to limit the spread of these viruses. We know that protection from the diseases they cause can only be achieved by immunizing a very high percentage of the population.***
>
> To limit exposure to these viruses, we urge the use of face masks in public meetings whenever social distancing is not possible. ***To provide personal protection from such severe infections, we urge individuals to be vaccinated. Available vaccines have proven to be both safe and effective.***
>
> We can win this war if everyone will follow the wise and thoughtful recommendations of medical experts and government leaders. Please know of our sincere love and great concern for all of God's children.
>
> The First Presidency
>
> Russell M. Nelson
> Dallin H. Oaks
> Henry B. Eyring
>
> (Email to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Thursday, August 12, 2021; "The First Presidency Urges Latter-day Saints to Wear Face Masks When Needed and Get Vaccinated Against COVID-19," *Newsroom,* 12 August 2021)

## A Voice of Warning

**Brigham Young**

> You cannot destroy the appointment of a prophet of God, but you can cut the thread that binds you to the prophet of God, and sink yourselves to hell.
>
> (Conference Report, May 1963, p. 81)

**Joseph Smith**

> I will inform you that it is contrary to the economy of God for any member of the Church, or any one, to receive instruction for those in authority, higher than themselves; therefore you will see the impropriety of giving heed to them.
>
> ("Order by Which Revelation Comes," *TPJS,* p. 21–22)

**Joseph Smith**

> I will give you one of the Keys of the mysteries of the Kingdom. It is an eternal principle, that has existed with God from all eternity: That man who rises up to condemn other, finding fault with the Church, saying that they are out of the way, while he himself is righteous, then know assuredly, that that man is in the high road to apostasy; and if he does not repent, will apostatize, as God lives. The principle is as correct as the one that Jesus put forth...
>
> ("A Key to Mysteries," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p.156)

**George Q. Cannon**

> Whenever you see a man disobeying the counsel of the Lord through the Holy Priesthood, you may know that unless he repents, he will apostatize. It is a sure sign of apostasy. A man may be an Apostle, a Seventy, a High Priest, an Elder or a Bishop, yet if he tries to divide the people and persuades them to disobey the Prophet of God, he will surely fall, unless he repents with all his heart. The Lord asks us to obey Him. He tells us how to do so. He does not ask for blind obedience, because He gives His Holy Spirit to all who ask for it to show them that it is right to obey.
>
> ("Satan Hates a United People," *Gospel Truth,* Vol. 1, pp. 210–11)

**President Wilford Woodruff**

> The Lord will never permit me or any other man who stands as President of this Church to lead you astray. It is not in the programme. It is not in the mind of God. If I were to attempt that, the Lord would remove me out of my place, and so He will any other man who attempts to lead the children of men astray from the oracles of God and from their duty.
>
> (Official Declaration 1)

**Harold B. Lee**

> Years ago as a young missionary I visited Nauvoo and Carthage with my mission president, and we were holding a missionary meeting in the jail room where Joseph and Hyrum had met their deaths. The mission president related the historical events that led up to the martyrdom and then he closed with this very significant statement: 'When the Prophet Joseph Smith was martyred, there were many saints who died spiritually with Joseph.' So it was when Brigham Young died: so it was when John Taylor died. ... Some Church members died spiritually with Wilford Woodruff, with Lorenzo Snow, with Joseph F. Smith, with Heber J. Grant, with George Albert Smith. We have some today willing to believe someone who is dead and gone and to accept his words as having more authority than the words of a living authority today.
>
> (*Stand Ye in Holy Places* [1974], 152–53)

**Harold B. Lee**

Those who do not accept God's revelation through his prophets have devised numerous philosophies from their limited human reasoning and seemingly think that they can find happiness and the satisfaction of their souls by ignoring God's plan of salvation. One of the greatest threats to the work of the Lord today comes from false educational ideas. There is a growing tendency of teachers within and without the church to make academic interpretations of gospel teachings—to read, as a prophet-leader has said, "by the lamp of their own conceit." Unfortunately, much in the sciences, the arts, politics, and the entertainment field, as has been well said by an eminent scholar, is "all dominated by this humanistic approach which ignores God and his word as revealed through the prophets." This kind of worldly system apparently hopes to draw men away from God by making man the "measure of all things," as some worldly philosophers have said... That this danger would be among us today was foreshadowed by the ancient prophets, who gave us a sure measure by which we might know that which is of God and that which emanates from evil sources...

In these days of our generation, many of you are asking: Where is safety? The word of the Lord is not silent. He has admonished us: 'But my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die.' (D&C 45:32.) ... clearly the Lord has placed the responsibility of directing the work ... in the hands of his divinely appointed leaders. May I fervently pray that all Saints and truth-seekers everywhere will attune their listening ears to these prophet-leaders... As one studies the Lord's commandments and attending promises upon compliance therewith, one gets some definite ideas as to how we might 'stand in holy places,' as the Lord commands—if we will be preserved with such protection as accords with his holy purposes, in order that we might be numbered among the 'pure in heart' who constitute Zion, as I have read from the Lord's own words.

(In Conference Report, Oct. 1968, pp. 61–62.)

**Elder Henry B. Eyring**

Another fallacy is to believe that the choice to accept or not accept the counsel of prophets is no more than deciding whether to accept good advice and gain its benefits or to stay where we are. But the choice not to take prophetic counsel changes the very ground upon which we stand. It becomes more dangerous. The failure to take prophetic counsel lessens our power to take inspired counsel in the future. The best time to have decided to help Noah build the ark was the first time he asked. Each time he asked after that, each failure to respond would have lessened sensitivity to the Spirit. And so each time his request would have seemed more foolish, until the rain came. And then it was too late.

Looking for the path to safety in the counsel of prophets makes sense to those with strong faith. When a prophet speaks, those with little faith may think that they hear only a wise man giving good advice. Then if his counsel seems comfortable and reasonable, squaring with what they want to do, they take it. If it does not, they consider it either faulty advice or they see their circumstances as justifying their being an exception to the counsel. Those without faith may think that they hear only men seeking to exert influence for some selfish motive. They may mock and deride, as did a man named Korihor...

Korihor was arguing, as men and women have falsely argued from the beginning of time, that to take counsel from the servants of God is to surrender God-given rights of independence. But the argument is false because it misrepresents reality. When we reject the counsel which comes from God, we do not choose to be independent of outside influence. We choose another influence. We reject the protection of a perfectly loving, all-powerful, all-knowing Father in Heaven, whose whole purpose, as that of His Beloved Son, is to give us eternal life, to give us all that He has, and to bring us home again in families to the arms of His love. In rejecting His counsel, we choose the influence of another power, whose purpose is to make us miserable and whose motive is hatred. We have moral agency as a gift of God. Rather than the right to choose to be free of influence, it is the inalienable right to submit ourselves to whichever of those powers we choose.

("Finding Safety in Counsel," General Conference, April 1997)

## The Voices (The Spirit of Elijah)

**Joseph Smith—History 1**

**38** And again, he quoted the fifth verse thus: Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

**39** He also quoted the next verse differently: And he ***shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers.*** If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming.

**Doctrine and Covenants 128**

**18** ... for it is necessary in the ushering in of the dispensation of the fulness of times, which dispensation is now beginning to usher in, that a whole and complete and perfect union, and welding together of dispensations, and keys, and powers, and glories should take place, and be revealed from the days of Adam even to the present time. And not only this, ***but those things which never have been revealed from the foundation of the world, but have been kept hid from the wise and prudent, shall be revealed unto babes and sucklings in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times.***

**19** Now, what do we hear in the gospel which we have received? A voice of gladness! ***A voice of mercy from heaven; and a voice of truth out of the earth; glad tidings for the dead; a voice of gladness for the living and the dead; glad tidings of great joy. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those that bring glad tidings of good things, and that say unto Zion: Behold, thy God reigneth! As the dews of Carmel, so shall the knowledge of God descend upon them!***

**President Russell M. Nelson**

We live in the day that "our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation."[1]

**Footnote 1: Doctrine and Covenants 121:27**
(See below.)

("Hear Him," General Conference, April 2020)

**Doctrine and Covenants 121**

**26** God shall give unto you knowledge by his Holy Spirit, yea, by the unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost, ***that has not been revealed since the world was until now;***

**27** Which ***our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation to be revealed in the last times, which their minds were pointed to by the angels, as held in reserve for the fulness of their glory;***

**28** A time to come in the which nothing shall be withheld, whether there be one God or many gods, they shall be manifest.

**29** All thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, shall be revealed and set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**30** And also, if there be bounds set to the heavens or to the seas, or to the dry land, or to the sun, moon, or stars—

**31** All the times of their revolutions, all the appointed days, months, and years, and all the days of their days, months, and years, and all their glories, laws, and set times, shall be revealed in the days of the dispensation of the fulness of times—

**32** According to that which was ordained in the midst of the Council of the Eternal God of all other gods before this world was, that should be

reserved unto the finishing and the end thereof, when every man shall enter into his eternal presence and into his immortal rest.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

The Bible says, "I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

Now, the word turn here should be translated bind, or seal. But what is the object of this important mission? or how is it to be fulfilled? The keys are to be delivered, the spirit of Elijah is to come, the Gospel to be established, the Saints of God gathered, ***Zion built up, à and the Saints to come up as saviors on Mount Zion.***

But how are they to become saviors on Mount Zion? By building their temples, erecting their baptismal fonts, and going forth and receiving all the ordinances, baptisms, confirmations, washings, anointings, ordinations and sealing powers upon their heads, in behalf of all their progenitors who are dead, and redeem them ***that they may come forth in the first resurrection and be exalted to thrones of glory with them;*** and herein is the chain that binds the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, which fulfills the mission of Elijah. And I would to God that this temple was now done, that we might go into it, and go to work and improve our time, and make use of the seals while they are on earth.

("The Sending of Elijah," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 330)

## Many are Called; Few aren't Swept

**Doctrine and Covenants 105**

**35** There has been a day of calling, but the time has come for a day of choosing; and let those be chosen that are worthy.

**36** And it shall be manifest unto my servant, by the voice of the Spirit, those that are chosen; and they shall be sanctified;

**37** ***And inasmuch as they follow the counsel which they receive,*** they shall have power after many days to accomplish all things pertaining to Zion.

**Doctrine and Covenants 121**

**33** How long can rolling waters remain impure? What power shall stay the heavens? As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course, or to turn it up stream, as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints.

**34** Behold, there are many called, ***but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?***

**35** ***Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men*** ...

**3 Nephi 27**

**33** And it came to pass that when Jesus had ended these sayings he said unto his disciples: Enter ye in at the strait gate; for strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leads to life, ***and few there be that find it;*** but wide is the gate, and broad the way which leads to death, and many there be that travel therein, until the night cometh, wherein no man can work.

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

We live in a day when the whole social structure is dividing itself into two camps. This is a day of the polarization of all people. In the Church the faithful members are perfecting their lives and drawing nearer to the Lord and his way of life. In the world wickedness is increasing and the rebellious and carnal among men are sinking to lower levels of evil and depravity than has been the case in any past days. These trends will continue unabated until the Lord comes. When he arrives there will be, on the one hand, a people prepared to meet him, and, on the other hand, there will be greater wickedness and carnality than has ever before been known. As time goes on, fewer and fewer among men will remain aloof from one or the other of these camps.

Then when the Lord comes, he himself will both cause and complete the division among the people. Then there will be a great day of separation in which the wicked will be consumed and the righteous will be rewarded. ...

... The Lord does not delight in the destruction of the wicked. His bounteous mercy and grace and goodness are available for all men in all ages, but they are poured out only upon those whose works merit the receipt of such a wondrous boon. "For behold, the righteous shall not perish; for the time surely must come that all they who fight against Zion shall be cut off."

(*Millennial Messiah,* pp. 554–55, 560)

**Doctrine and Covenants 112**

**23** Verily, verily, I say unto you, darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the people, and all flesh has become corrupt ***before my face.***

**24** Behold, ***vengeance cometh speedily*** upon the inhabitants of the earth, a day of wrath, a day of burning, a day of desolation, of weeping, of mourning, and of lamentation; ***and as a whirlwind it shall come*** upon all the face of the earth, saith the Lord.

**25** And upon my house shall it begin, and from my house shall it go forth, saith the Lord;

**26** ***First among those among you, saith the Lord, who have professed to know my name and have not known me, and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house, saith the Lord.***

**Matthew 25 (JST)**

**5** And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

**6** Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

**7** And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; ***for our lamps are gone out.***

**8** But the wise answered, saying, Lest there be not enough for us and you, go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

**9** And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

**10** Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us.

**11** But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, ***Ye know me not.***

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Repent, repent, is the voice of God to Zion; and strange as it may appear, yet it is true, mankind will persist in self-justification until all their iniquity is exposed, and their character past being redeemed, and that which is treasured up in their hearts be exposed to the gaze of mankind. I say to you (and what I say to you I say to all), hear the warning voice of God, lest Zion fall, and the Lord swear in His wrath the inhabitants of Zion shall not enter into His rest.

The brethren in Kirtland pray for you unceasingly, for, knowing the terrors of the Lord, they greatly fear for you. You will see that the Lord commanded us..., this is the word of the Lord to us, and we must, yea, the Lord helping us, we will obey: as on conditions of our obedience He has promised us great things; yea, even a visit from the heavens to honor us with His own presence. We greatly fear before the Lord lest we should fail of this great honor, which our Master proposes to confer on us; we are seeking for humility and great faith lest we be ashamed in His presence. Our hearts are greatly grieved at the spirit which is breathed

…, the very spirit which is wasting the strength of Zion like a pestilence; and if it is not detected and driven from you, it will ripen Zion for the threatened judgments of God. Remember God sees the secret springs of human action, and knows the hearts of all living.

Brother, suffer us to speak plainly, for God has respect to the feelings of His Saints, and He will not suffer them to be tantalized with impunity. * * * All we can say by way of conclusion is, if the fountain of our tears be not dried up, we will still weep for Zion. This from your brother who trembles for Zion, and for the wrath of heaven, which awaits her if she repents not.

(Signed) JOSEPH SMITH, JUN.

("A Warning to Zion," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 18–19)

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

The Lord has also prophesied of these things, and they have been mentioned by ancient seers and prophets. We have had ample warning. We have been told of the calamities that are coming. We have been taught how we might avoid them, how we might be protected, ***if we would only hear the counsels that come to us, heed the testimony of truth.*** If we fail, we cannot escape… Do not think that we have reached a condition where things could not be worse. Unless there is repentance they will be worse. And so I cry repentance to this people, to the Latter-day Saints, to the people of the nation, and to the nations of the earth everywhere… How to escape calamities?

HOW ZION MAY ESCAPE THE LORD'S SCOURGE.

"Nevertheless, Zion shall escape if she observe to do all things whatsoever I have commanded her. But if she observe not to do whatsoever I have commanded her, I will visit her according to all her works, with sore affliction, with ***pestilence, with plague, with sword, with vengeance,*** with devouring fire."

This way of escape, insuring the protection of the Lord, is a very simple one. Unfortunately, many of the people of Zion have refused to take advantage of this promise. As I observe conditions among the people I cannot see how we are going to escape when the judgments are to pass over the nations, which are promised in this revelation and in others which I cannot take time to read. Because of our disobedience and our failure to keep the commandments of the Lord, ***the righteous, as in times past, may be called upon to suffer with the unrighteous among us.***

(*Doctrines of Salvation,* Volume 3, pp. 25, 31–32)

**Doctrine and Covenants 121**

**15** ***And not many years hence,*** that they and their posterity ***shall be swept*** from under heaven, saith God, ***that not one of them is left to stand by the wall.***

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that ***not many years shall pass away*** before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will ***sweep*** the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for ***the*** return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country. The people of the Lord, those who have complied with the requirements of the new covenant, have already commenced gathering together to ***Zion, which is in the state of Missouri;*** therefore I declare unto you the warning which the Lord has commanded me to declare unto this generation, remembering that the eyes of my Maker are upon me, and that to Him I am accountable for every word I say, wishing nothing worse to my fellowmen than their eternal salvation; therefore, "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come." Repent ye, repent ye, and embrace the everlasting covenant, and flee to Zion, before the overflowing scourge overtake you… Remember these things; call upon the Lord while He is near, and seek Him while He may be found, is the exhortation of your unworthy servant.

("Zion and Jerusalem," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 17)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

The Saints have not too much time to save and redeem their dead, and gather together their living relatives, that they may be saved also, before the earth will be smitten, and the consumption decreed falls upon the world.

I would advise all the Saints to go with their might and gather together all their living relatives to this place, that they may be sealed and saved, that they may be prepared against the day that the destroying angel goes forth; and ***if the whole Church should go to with all their might to save their dead, seal their posterity, and gather their living friends, and spend none of their time in behalf of the world, they would hardly get through before night would come, when no man can work;*** and my only trouble at the present time is concerning ourselves, that the Saints will be divided, broken up, and scattered, ***before we get our salvation secure; for there are so many fools in the world for the devil to operate upon, it gives him the advantage oftentimes.***

("Saints Have Not Much Time," *TPJS,* p. 330)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

But to proceed. In the letter alluded to, the principles of repentance and baptism for the remission of sins were not only set forth, but many passages of scripture were quoted, clearly elucidating the subject; let me add, I do positively rely upon the truth of those principles inculcated in the New Testament, and then pass on from the above-named items, to the item or subject of the gathering, and show my views upon this point. ***It is a principle I esteem to be of the greatest importance to those who are looking for salvation in this generation,*** or in these, that may be called, "the latter times." All that the prophets that have written, from the days of righteous Abel, down to the last man that has left any testimony on record for our consideration, in speaking of the salvation of Israel in the last days, goes directly to show that it consists in the work of the gathering.

First, I shall begin by quoting from the prophecy of Enoch, speaking of the last days: "Righteousness will I send down out of heaven, and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten, His resurrection from the dead (this resurrection I understand to be the corporeal body); yea, and also the resurrection of all men; righteousness and truth will I cause to ***sweep*** the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine own elect from the four quarters of the earth, ***unto a place which I shall prepare, a Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming, for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion a New Jerusalem."*** (Moses 7:62, 1902 edition.)

Now I understand by this quotation, that God clearly manifested to Enoch the redemption which He prepared, by offering the Messiah as a Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world; and by virtue of the same, the glorious resurrection of the Savior, ***and the resurrection of all the human family, even a resurrection of their corporeal bodies, is brought to pass; and also righteousness and truth are to sweep the earth as with a flood. And now, I ask, how righteousness and truth are going to sweep the earth as with a flood? I will answer. Men and angels are to be co-workers in bringing to pass this great work, and Zion is to be prepared, even a new Jerusalem, for the elect that are to be gathered from the four quarters of the earth, and to be established an holy city, for the tabernacle of the Lord shall be with them.***

("Righteousness to Sweep the Earth," *TPJS,* p. 83)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Whatever you may hear about me or Kirtland, take no notice of it; for if it be a place of refuge, the devil will use his greatest efforts to trap the

Saints. You must make yourselves acquainted with those men who like Daniel pray three times a day toward the House of the Lord. Look to the Presidency and receive instruction. Every man who is afraid, covetous, will be taken in a snare. The time is soon coming, when no man will have any peace but in Zion and her stakes.

I saw men hunting the lives of their own sons, and brother murdering brother, women killing their own daughters, and daughters seeking the lives of their mothers. I saw armies arrayed against armies. I saw blood, desolation, fires. The Son of Man has said that the mother shall be against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother. These things are at our doors. They will follow the Saints of God from city to city. Satan will rage, and the spirit of the devil is now enraged. I know not how soon these things will take place; but with a view of them, shall I cry peace? No; I will lift up my voice and testify of them. How long you will have good crops, and the famine be kept off, I do not know; when the fig tree leaves, know then that the summer is nigh at hand.

(*Journal of Discourses,* vol. 6, pp. 237–240)

**Elder Heber C. Kimball**

An army of Elders will be sent to the four quarters of the earth to search out the righteous and warn the wicked of what is coming. All kinds of religions will be started and miracles performed that will deceive the very elect if that were possible. Our sons and daughters must live pure lives so as to be prepared for what is coming. After a while the Gentiles will gather by the thousands to this place, and Salt Lake City will be classed among the wicked cities of the world. A spirit of speculation and extravagance will take possession of the Saints, and the results will be financial bondage. Persecution comes next and all true Latter-day Saints will be tested to the limit. Many will apostatize and others will be still not knowing what to do. Darkness will cover the earth and gross darkness the minds of the people. The judgments of God will be poured out on the wicked to the extent that our Elders from far and near will be called home, or in other words the gospel will be taken from the Gentiles and later on carried to the Jews. The western boundary of the State of Missouri ***will be swept so clean of its inhabitants*** that as President Young tells us, when you return to that place, there will not be left so much as a yellow dog to wag his tail. Before that day comes, however, the Saints will be put to a test that will try the integrity of the best of them. ***The pressure will become so great that the more righteous among them will cry unto the Lord day and night until deliverance comes...***

[For] the time is coming when we will be mixed up in these now peaceful valleys to that extent that it will be difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God. Then, brethren, look out for the great sieve, for there will be a great sifting time, and many will fall; for I say unto you there is a test, a Test, a TEST coming, and who will be able to stand? This church has before it many close places through which it must pass before the work of God is crowned with victory. To meet the difficulties that are coming it will be necessary for you to have knowledge of the truth of this work for yourselves. The difficulties will be of such character that the man or woman who does not possess this personal knowledge or witness will fall. If you have not got the testimony, live right and call upon the Lord and cease not 'till you obtain it. If you do not, ***you will not stand...*** Then the Prophet Joseph and others will make their appearance and those who have remained faithful will be selected to return to Jackson County, Missouri and take part in the building of that beautiful city, the New Jerusalem.

(May 1868, in Deseret News, 23 May 1931; see also Conference Report, Oct. 1930, p. 58–59; Orson F. Whitney, Life of Heber C. Kimball, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1945, p. 446, Smith, Robert W. and Elisabeth A., Scriptural and Secular Prophecies Pertaining to The Last Days, Ninth Edition, Pyramid Press, SLC, UT, 1947, pp. 134–138; Deseret News, May 23, 1931; W. Cleon Skousen, Prophecy and Modern Times, pp. 31–33, An Army of Elders, May 1868, Heber C. Kimball Reported by his son J. Golden Kimball, CR October 1930, p. 58. See also Prophetic Sayings of Heber C. Kimball to Sister Amanda H. Wilcox)

**Doctrine and Covenants 109**

**29** We ask thee, Holy Father, to confound, and astonish, and to bring to shame and confusion, ***all those who have spread lying reports abroad, over the world, against thy servant or servants,*** if they will not repent, when the everlasting gospel shall be proclaimed in their ears;

**30** And that all their works may be brought to naught, and be ***swept away by the hail, and by the judgments which thou wilt send upon them in thine anger,*** that there may be an end to lyings and slanders against thy people.

**31** For thou knowest, O Lord, that ***thy servants have been innocent*** before thee in bearing record of thy name, for which they have suffered these things.

**32** Therefore we ***plead before thee for a full and complete deliverance from under this yoke;***

Amen.

# SECTION II

# Zeal Without Knowledge

*"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."*

*—Paul (Romans 10:1-3)*

*"We have the right to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, but we cannot have that guidance, if we wilfully refuse to consider the revelations that have been given to help us to understand and to guide us in the light and truth of the everlasting gospel. We cannot hope to have that guidance when we refuse to consider these great revelations which mean so much to us both temporally and spiritually."*

*—Joseph Fielding Smith (Doctrines of Salvation, p. 43)*

*"Repent and come unto me and be baptized in my name and know of the true points of my doctrine, that [ye] may be numbered among my people, O house of Israel."*

*—Jesus Christ (3 Nephi 21:6)*

# And He Spake A Parable Unto Them

## The Parable of the Truck

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> I am not at all astonished at what has happened to you, neither what has happed to Zion, and I could tell you all the whys and wherefores of all these calamites. But alas, it is in vain to warn and give precepts, for all men are naturally disposed to walk in their own paths as they are pointed out by their own fingers, and are not willing to consider and walk in the path which is pointed out by another, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, although he should be an unerring director, and the Lord his God sent him. …
>
> [they] are blind, and they lead the blind, and they fall into the ditch together. They build with hay, wood, and stubble, on the old revelations, without the true priesthood or spirit of revelation. If I had time, I would dig into hell, hades, sheol, and tell what exists there.
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 26–27, 311)

There was a man who lived at the base of a large mountain, a large hazardous mountain, and the man from his house had to witness many travelers attempt to get over the mountain, but perish on the hazardous road. Many perished because they simply did not know the way, others because their vehicle could not or would not survive the trip.

One day the man cried unto the Lord, "Oh Lord, what can I do to help save some of my brothers and sisters on their journey?"

The Lord responded and asked the man, "Do you love me?"

To which the man responded, "Yea Lord, thou knowest that I love you!"

The Lord then asked the man, "Have you consecrated all your time, heart, mind, and all that thou possess to me?"

To which the man replied, "Yea Lord, thou knowest that everything I own is thine!"

The Lord then told the man to fix up his truck, add a GPS to it, and give it free of charge to those journeying up the mountain. The man did so. Fixing and painting his truck, polishing and tuning and adding a GPS.

It wasn't long before a family in a broken-down van was pulling up the street toward the mountain. The man ran out into the street and stopped the family.

"Wait!" cried he, "We need to talk!"

The family stopped and heard the man out. He explained what he had to see on a daily basis with families perishing going up the mountain. He explained the prayers he had and what he was told to do, and then he showed the family the truck.

"Free you say?" asks the father.

"Yes!" says the man, "Please, take it! Just don't perish!"

The family enters the car and takes their seats, and then the father notices that the car is reading in kilometers per hour and not miles per hour.

"Oh no, this just won't do!" says the man, "this speedometer offends me!"

Confused, the man explains, "Well sir, the car is free. It will save your life, and you can always click this button here and change it to MPH."

The father looked disgruntled, "You're telling me, that in order for me to be able to stand this vehicle, that I will have to push a button?!"

The man is now completely puzzled, "Yes sir… but the car is free, and it will save your life, and all you have to do is push a single button—"

The man was interrupted by the wife, "Oh honey! This won't do! Look at the GPS! The voice is that of Brian Reagan!"

The man tried to point at the GPS and explain, "Oh, you can change that or mute it right—"

But the family had had enough. "That's it! Family, we are leaving this brand new 4x4 with a GPS! The Lord would never expect so much from us! I mean the nerve… to tell us to push a button? Mute or change the voice? Pish posh!"

The wife scowled and shook her head all the way back to their broken-down van and ripped map. "You should be ashamed of yourself sir!"

The man looked on, as the shock of what he was witnessing was rocking his body. "Why?" he thought as he watched the family drive up the road. It wasn't long before the van flipped and exploded into a blazing display of fire and ash. "Why?" asked the man to the Lord, "Why? I did all you asked, I provided for free, and it could have helped save them!"

The Lord comforted the man, "Son, their blood is not on your hands, do ye my work and continue in my ways and ye shall be saved." So the man continued his work. Some on the road accepted the free truck with thanksgiving in their hearts and passed safely over the mountain, while others could not simply stand the thought of having to push a single button for a free truck, and thus exploded and went out in blazing glory on the mountain.

Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

## The Parable of the Sower

### Backdrop

1. In 2020, people woke up.
2. People realized the desperate need to wake up, that "simply going to church" wasn't enough, that it hadn't and wouldn't cut it for exaltation, and that they needed the "good fruit."
3. People began to pray, fast, etc. for their loved ones to also wake up, leave Babylon with them, and produce fruit.
4. People began to realize that they might have to leave family behind and make sacrifices.
5. People began to rationalize away everything they had just learned and the need for "good fruit."
6. People's rationalization is complete, they have accepted "grace without works," and weekly mundane church service with a bare minimum effort is once again rationalized away as "enough for exaltation."
7. People begin to withdraw, the devil now having full power over them, the flaxen cord now back to thick chains… or in other words, the seed was planted in stony places.

Those with eyes to see have just witnessed live what **Joseph Smith** saw only in vision:

> I was surrounded by my friends, and while looking at this harbor I saw a steamboat approaching the harbor. There were bridges on the pier for persons to cross, and there came up a wind and drove the steamboat under one of the bridges and upset it. I ran up to the boat, expecting the persons would all drown; and wishing to do something to assist them, I put my hand against the side of the boat, and with one surge I shoved it under the bridge and righted it up, and then told them to take care of themselves. But it was not long before I saw them starting out into the channel or main body of the water again. The storms were raging and

> the waters rough. I said to my friends that if they did not understand the signs of the times and the spirit of prophecy, they would be apt to be lost. It was but a few moments after when we saw the waves break over the boat, and she soon foundered and went down with all on board.
>
> (*History of the Church,* 6:194–95)

## The Parable

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **The sower of the seed** | Luke 8:5<br>Mark 4:3<br>Matt. 13:3 | A sower went out to sow his seed: |
| **By the wayside** | Luke 8:5<br>Mark 4:4<br>Matt. 13:4 | and as he sowed some fell by the way side; and were trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured them up. |
| **On stony ground** | Luke 8:6<br>Mark 4:5<br>Matt. 13:5 | Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprang up; and when the sun was up, they were scorched because they had no deepness of earth; and because they had no root, they withered away. |
| **Among thorns** | Luke 8:7<br>Mark 4:6<br>Matt. 13:6 | And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with them, and choked them, and they yielded no fruit. |
| **On good ground** | Luke 8:8<br>Mark 4:7<br>Matt. 13:7 | But others fell on good ground, and sprang up, yielding fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixtyfold, and some an hundredfold. |

## The Meaning

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| **The sower meaning** | Matt. 13:37<br>D&C 1:38<br>D&C 101:12 | Now the parable is this: He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man: and whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, those upon the watchtower, or in other words, all mine Israel, it is the same. |
| **The seed meaning** | Luke 8:11<br>Mark 4:13 | The sower soweth the seed and the seed ***is the word of God.*** |
| **By the wayside meaning** | Luke 8:12<br>Mark 4:14<br>Matt. 13:18<br>*TPJS,* p. 96 | They who received the seed by the wayside are they who heareth the word of the kingdom and understandeth not, for these are men of no principle of truth, therefore they understandeth not truth. Then cometh the wicked one, the devil, Satan, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts, for they had no desire for righteousness in them, lest they should believe and be saved. |
| **On stony ground meaning** | Luke 8:13<br>Mark 4:15<br>Matt. 13:19 | And they that received the seed into stony places, the same are they that heareth the word and readily with joy receiveth it, yet they have not root in themselves, and so endureth in belief but for a while; for when in a time of temptation or weakness, tribulation or persecution or affliction arise against them, because of the word or for the word's sake, by and by they are offended and fall away. |
| **Among thorns meaning** | Luke 8:14<br>Mark 4:16<br>Matt. 13:20 | And these are they who receive the word among thorns, they are they who hear the word, and the cares of this world and the pleasures of life, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in choke the word; and they becometh unfruitful, bringing no fruit to perfection. |
| **On good ground meaning** | Luke 8:15,<br>Mark 4:17<br>Matt. 13:21 | But they who received seed into the good ground are they who receive the word in an honest and good heart, having heard the word and understandeth, keep what they hear, enduring with patience and bring forth fruit; some thirtyfold, some sixty and some an hundred. |

## The Lesson

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **The Call** | Matt. 7:13–14<br>3 Ne. 14:13–14<br>3 Ne. 27:33 | Repent, therefore, and enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction; and many there be who go in thereat. Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it. |
| **The Warning** | Matt. 7:15<br>Matt. 16:12<br>3 Ne. 14:15 | Take heed, beware of the leaven of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves, yea, beware their false doctrine. |
| **The Key, The Fruit** | Matt. 7:16–20<br>Luke 6:43<br>3 Ne. 14:17–23<br>D&C 11:20 | Ye shall know them by their fruits, for do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire, for good fruit are the good works of men, which is your work, to keep my commandments, yea, with all your might, mind and strength. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. |
| **Wise Man** | Matt. 7:24<br>Luke 6:48<br>3 Ne. 14:24 | Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock; and the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house; and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. |
| **Foolish Man** | Matt. 7:26–27<br>Luke 6:49<br>3 Ne. 14:26 | And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand; and the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it. |
| **Final Warning** | JST, Matt. 7:30–33<br>Luke 8:8<br>3 Ne. 14:22 | Verily, I say unto you, It is not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, that shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. For the day soon cometh that men shall come before me to judgment, to be judged according to their works. And many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name; and in thy name cast out devils; and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I say, Ye never knew me; depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Jesus cried, 'he that hath ears to hear, let him hear.' |

## The Second Witness

**Jacob 6**

**2** … the day that [the Lord God] shall set his hand again the second time to recover his people, is the day, yea, even the last time, that the servants of the Lord shall go forth in his power, to nourish and prune his vineyard; and after that the end soon cometh.

**3** And how blessed are they who have labored diligently in his vineyard; and how cursed are they who shall be cast out into their own place! And the world shall be burned with fire.

**4** And how merciful is our God unto us, for he remembereth the house of Israel, both roots and branches; and he stretches forth his hands unto them all the day long; and they are a stiffnecked and a gainsaying people; but as many as will not harden their hearts shall be saved in the kingdom of God.

**5** Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I beseech of you in words of soberness that ye would repent, and come with full purpose of heart, and cleave unto God as he cleaveth unto you. And while his arm of mercy is extended towards you in the light of the day, harden not your hearts.

**6** Yea, today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts; for why will ye die?

**7** For behold, after ye have been nourished by the good word of God all the day long, will ye bring forth evil fruit, that ye must be hewn down and cast into the fire?

**8** Behold, will ye reject these words? Will ye reject the words of the prophets; and will ye reject all the words which have been spoken concerning Christ, after so many have spoken concerning him; and deny the good word of Christ, and the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and quench the Holy Spirit, and make a mock of the great plan of redemption, which hath been laid for you?

**9** Know ye not that if ye will do these things, that the power of the redemption and the resurrection, which is in Christ, will bring you to stand with shame and awful guilt before the bar of God?

**10** And according to the power of justice, for justice cannot be denied, ye must go away into that lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames are unquenchable, and whose smoke ascendeth up forever and ever, which lake of fire and brimstone is endless torment.

**11** O then, my beloved brethren, repent ye, and enter in at the strait gate, and continue in the way which is narrow, until ye shall obtain eternal life.

**12** O be wise; what can I say more?

**13** Finally, I bid you farewell, until I shall meet you before the pleasing bar of God, which bar striketh the wicked with awful dread and fear. Amen.

## The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares

**Doctrine and Covenants 86**

**1** Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you my servants, concerning the parable of the wheat and of the tares:

**2** Behold, verily I say, the field was the world, and the apostles were the sowers of the seed;

**3** And after they have fallen asleep the great persecutor of the church, the apostate, the whore, even Babylon, that maketh all nations to drink of her cup, in whose hearts the enemy, even Satan, sitteth to reign—behold he soweth the tares; wherefore, the tares choke the wheat and drive the church into the wilderness.

**4** But behold, in the last days, even now while the Lord is beginning to bring forth the word, and the blade is springing up and is yet tender—

**5** Behold, verily I say unto you, the angels are crying unto the Lord day and night, who are ready and waiting to be sent forth to reap down the fields;

**6** But the Lord saith unto them, pluck not up the tares while the blade is yet tender (for verily your faith is weak), lest you destroy the wheat also.

**7** Therefore, let the wheat and the tares grow together until the harvest is fully ripe; then ye shall first gather out the wheat from among the tares, and after the gathering of the wheat, behold and lo, the tares are bound in bundles, and the field remaineth to be burned.

**President Russell M. Nelson**

The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do (see Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7).

("The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior's Second Coming," *Ensign,* April 2020)

**Doctrine and Covenants 1**

**11** Wherefore the voice of the Lord is unto the ends of the earth, that all that will hear may hear:

**12** Prepare ye, prepare ye for that which is to come, for the Lord is nigh;

**13** And the anger of the Lord is kindled, and his sword is bathed in heaven, and it shall fall upon the inhabitants of the earth.

**14** And the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, shall be cut off from among the people;

**15** For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant;

**16** They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.

**Doctrine and Covenants 64**

**34** Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days.

**35** And the rebellious shall be cut off out of the land of Zion, and shall be sent away, and shall not inherit the land.

**36** For, verily I say that the rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim, wherefore they shall be plucked out.

**37** Behold, I, the Lord, have made my church in these last days like unto a judge sitting on a hill, or in a high place, to judge the nations.

**38** For it shall come to pass that the inhabitants of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion.

**39** And liars and hypocrites shall be proved by them, and they who are not apostles and prophets shall be known.

**40** And even the bishop, who is a judge, and his counselors, if they are not faithful in their stewardships shall be condemned, and others shall be planted in their stead.

**41** For, behold, I say unto you that Zion shall flourish, and the glory of the Lord shall be upon her;

**42** And she shall be an ensign unto the people, and there shall come unto her out of every nation under heaven.

**43** And the day shall come when the nations of the earth shall tremble because of her, and shall fear because of her terrible ones. The Lord hath spoken it. Amen.

**"Though in the Outward Church Below" (Hymns, No. 102)**

1. Though in the outward church below
   The wheat and tares together grow;

Jesus ere long will weed the crop,
And pluck the tares in anger up. …

4. We seem alike when thus we meet,
Strangers might think we all were wheat;
But to the Lord's all-searching eyes,
Each heart appears without disguise.
5. The tares are spared for various ends,
Some for the sake of praying friends,
Others the Lord, against their will,
Employs, his counsels to fulfill.
6. But though they grow so tall and strong,
His plan will not require them long;
In harvest, when he saves his own,
The tares shall into hell be thrown.

(The Joseph Smith Papers, "Collection of Sacred Hymns, 1835," pp. 115–116)

**Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7. "The parable of the wheat and of the tares"**

The **Prophet Joseph Smith** (1805–1844) explained that the parables recorded in Matthew 13 referred to the establishment of Christ's Church during His mortal life and also to the growth and destiny of that Church in the latter days (see *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 294).

Several years after the revelation recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 86 was received, Joseph Smith gave additional teachings regarding the parable of the wheat and the tares, and these teachings were published in the December 1835 issue of the *Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate* (see "To the Elders of the Church of the Latter Day Saints," 225–27). Speaking specifically of that parable, the **Prophet Joseph Smith** explained:

"Now we learn by this parable, not only the setting up of the Kingdom in the days of the Savior, which is represented by the good seed, which produced fruit, but also the corruptions of the Church, which are represented by the tares, which were sown by the enemy, which His disciples would fain have plucked up, or cleansed the Church of, if their views had been favored by the Savior. But He, knowing all things, says, Not so. As much as to say, your views are not correct, the Church is in its infancy, and if you take this rash step, you will destroy the wheat, or the Church, with the tares; therefore it is better to let them grow together until the harvest, or the end of the world, which means the destruction of the wicked, which is not yet fulfilled. …

"Now men cannot have any possible grounds to say that this [the Savior's clarification of the parable to His disciples, recorded in Matthew 13:36–39] is figurative, or that it does not mean what it says, for He is now explaining what He has previously spoken in parables; and according to this language, the end of the world is the destruction of the wicked; the harvest and the end of the world have an allusion directly to the human family in the last days. …

"'As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world' [Matthew 13:40]; that is, as the servants of God go forth warning the nations, both priests and people, and as they harden their hearts and reject the light of truth, these first being delivered over to the buffetings of Satan, and the law and the testimony being closed up, … they are left in darkness, and delivered over unto the day of burning; thus being bound up by their creeds, and their bands being made strong by their priests, [they] are prepared for the fulfillment of the saying of the Savior—'The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.' [Matthew 13:41–42.]

"We understand that the work of gathering together of the wheat into barns, or garners, is to take place while the tares are being bound over and preparing for the day of burning; that after the day of burnings, 'the righteous shall shine forth like the sun, in the Kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear' [Matthew 13:43]" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith,* 299–301; see also Manuscript History of the Church, vol. B–1, 645–46, josephsmithpapers.org).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual,* 2018)

**Doctrine and Covenants 86:6–7. "Let the wheat and the tares grow together"**

In the Lord's parable of the wheat and the tares, the wheat represented "the children of the kingdom" and the tares, or weeds, were planted by the enemy and represented "the children of the wicked one" (Matthew 13:38). The harvest referred to the time when the reapers would gather the tares to be burned and gather the wheat into the barn (see Matthew 13:30). In latter-day revelation, the Lord clarified the order of the reaping or harvesting, indicating that the wheat would be gathered first, and then the tares would be bound (see D&C 86:7; see also Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 13:29 [in Matthew 13:30, footnote b]). The parable emphasized the decision to wait until harvest time to separate the wheat from the tares. This demonstrated God's mercy in giving His children time to be strengthened in their faith before the separation of the righteous from the wicked at the end of the world (see D&C 38:12; 63:54; 88:94; 101:64–66). Until the time of harvest at the end of the world, the righteous and wicked will continue to "grow together" (D&C 86:7).

**Elder Neal A. Maxwell** (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles spoke of the challenge this presents to Latter-day Saints today:

"Church members will live in this wheat-and-tares situation until the Millennium. Some real tares even masquerade as wheat, including the few eager individuals who lecture the rest of us about Church doctrines in which they no longer believe. They criticize the use of Church resources to which they no longer contribute. They condescendingly seek to counsel the Brethren whom they no longer sustain. Confrontive, except of themselves of course, they leave the Church, but they cannot leave the Church alone (see ["The Net Gathers of Every Kind,"] *Ensign,* Nov. 1980, 14). …

"Therefore, brothers and sisters, quiet goodness must persevere, even when, as prophesied, a few actually rage in their anger against that which is good (see 2 Ne. 28:20). Likewise, the arrogance of critics must be met by the meekness and articulateness of believers. If sometimes ringed by resentment, we must still reach out, especially for those whose hands hang down (see D&C 81:5). If our shortcomings as a people are occasionally highlighted, then let us strive to do better" ("Becometh As a Child," *Ensign,* May 1996, 68).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual,* 2018)

## The Parable of the Bad Leaven

**Matthew 16**

**5** And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.

**6** ¶ Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

**7** And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread.

**8** Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?

**9** Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?

**10** Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?

> **11** How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?
>
> **12** Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

**Matthew 16:6–12. "Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (see also Mark 8:14–21; Luke 12:1)**

> The Savior taught His disciples to beware of "the leaven" of the Pharisees and Sadducees, which was their doctrine. **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** explained that this teaching of the Savior can be likened to the need to beware of false doctrines and philosophies in all ages: "Literally, leaven is a substance that produces fermentation, as for instance yeast which causes bread to rise. Figuratively, leaven is any element which, by its fermenting, spreading influence, affects groups of people so that they believe and act in particular ways. Thus to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees is to shun their false doctrines, their concept that the Messiah must prove his claim to divinity by signs, for instance. Similarly, today, the warning is to beware of the leaven of any group whose false doctrines and antichrist philosophies work to keep men from accepting the truths of the restored gospel" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 1:379).
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

**J. Reuben Clark, Jr.**

> I tell you we are beginning to follow along the course of the early Christian church. So long as that church was persecuted from without, it prospered, but when it began to be polluted from within, the church began to wither.
>
> There is creeping into our midst, and I warn you brethren about it, and I urge you to meet it, a great host of sectarian doctrines that have no place amongst us. ***The gospel in its simplicity, is to be found in the revelations, the teachings of the Prophet and the early leaders of the Church.***
>
> (*Conference Report,* October 1944, pp. 117–118)

## The Parable of the Spirit of the Earth

August 16 2020:

I don't make it a habit of making public things that I view as personally sacred, but this I was actually told to make public and share.

While praying, I saw in my mind a beautiful blue sphere that resembled something similar to a blue sun.

I asked the Lord if it was a blue sun, and I had a stupor of thought. It was a beautiful blue hue, and it was a sphere that I could see through; it wasn't solid. As I was thinking about what it could be, I saw a beautiful ring being formed around it. But once the circle was made complete, it just kept going, almost as though it was a comet with a flaming tail behind it so that I could tell it was an object and the tail behind it was showing its path. And then I saw more and more of these mesmerizing lights circle this sphere in like fashion, in what appeared to be a chaotic fashion, circling the sphere. I thought that it almost looked like an atom with electrons spinning around it.

I asked if what I was seeing was an atom, and I had another stupor of thought. I kept thinking of what it could be, and then I had a thought come to me that what I was seeing wasn't things of a temporal nature but things that might be of a spiritual nature. I came to the realization that what I was looking at was actually the spirit of the Earth. So then I asked the question, "what are these things, these mesmerizingly beautiful things, so fantasy like, spinning around the earth, increasing and increasing in numbers?" And I came to the realization that these were satellites orbiting the planet. I thought to myself, "this is beautiful, but why am I being shown this?" And as the thought entered my mind, I watched as the satellites became less mesmerizing and more dark in their orbit. The lines behind them were no longer magical but resembled that of wire or paracord, and the paths that they were taking around the earth seemed to get tighter to the earth. And then the line "flaxen becomes cord" popped into my head. Then I watched in horror as these once mesmerizing paths turned from now cords into actual linked chains, which appeared to actually start choking the spirit of the earth.

And soon I could not even see the spirit of the Earth through the chains. And then the thought popped into my head, "cords become thick chains." As the horrific scene closed, I heard someone laughing, and then I quickly wrote down what I had seen as well as the scriptures that had come to mind:

**2 Nephi 26**

> **22** And there are also secret combinations, even as in times of old, according to the combinations of the devil, for he is the founder of all these things; yea, the founder of murder, and works of darkness; yea, and he leadeth them by the neck with a flaxen cord, until he bindeth them with his strong cords forever.

**2 Nephi 28**

> **21** And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell.
>
> **22** And behold, others he flattereth away, and telleth them there is no hell; and he saith unto them: I am no devil, for there is none—and thus he whispereth in their ears, until he grasps them with his awful chains, from whence there is no deliverance.
>
> **23** Yea, they are grasped with death, and hell; and death, and hell, and the devil, and all that have been seized therewith must stand before the throne of God, and be judged according to their works, from whence they must go into the place prepared for them, even a lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment.

**Moses 7**

> **24** And there came generation upon generation; and Enoch was high and lifted up, even in the bosom of the Father, and of the Son of Man; and behold, the power of Satan was upon all the face of the earth.
>
> **25** And he saw angels descending out of heaven; and he heard a loud voice saying: Wo, wo be unto the inhabitants of the earth.
>
> **26** And he beheld Satan; and he had a great chain in his hand, and it veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness; and he looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced.

Thinking about what I saw, I was left with the knowledge that priestcraft through the internet would be how Satan binds the Saints on earth. I asked myself, "when I have a problem, when I have a question, do I go to the internet and my favorite priestcrafter, or do I go to the Lord through the scriptures?" The next thought that I had was, "who runs/owns the internet?" You cannot serve God and mammon. I have no idea why I might have been asked to share this other than to commit the Saints to sever their chains to Satan, their addictions, not just to pornography, but to Satan himself with priestcraft through the internet, social media, etc. The doctrines and philosophies of men are the bad leaven. We will not be able to survive in the days to come unless we learn how to "hear Him" for everything, and I testify that it is becoming increasingly near impossible to hear only Him on the internet.

August 16th, 2020 → How prophetic this turned out to be! A year later (almost to the day) of receiving this warning... Thank the Lord for His tender mercies.

## The Parable of the Plastic Necklace

There was a young daughter who was given a plastic necklace when she was very young, and she loved that plastic necklace more than life itself. One night when her father came in to tuck the child into bed, he kissed her and said, "I love you," to which the little girl replied, "I love you too, Daddy." The father responded, "Well, if you love me, give me your plastic necklace." The little girl looked shocked as she took in what her father was asking her, but after a moment, to recover she responded, "Oh no Daddy, that necklace was a gift from you; it is one of my most prized possessions!" To which the father hugged his daughter, kissed her lightly on the forehead, told her all is well, and bid her goodnight. This process continued for many years, with the father going in, telling his daughter that he loved her, the daughter saying she loved him, the father asking for the necklace, and the daughter refusing. Some nights the daughter would offer her father her stuffed animals or other toys that she owned, but all of which the father refused. This continued until one night, to the father's surprise, when he entered the room, he saw his daughter sitting at the edge of the bed with tears in her eyes. The father, quickly coming to her side and wrapping his arms around her, asked her what the matter was. The daughter gingerly placed the plastic necklace in her father's hand and whimpered, "I love you Daddy. You can have my necklace." The father, now with tears in his own eyes, took the plastic necklace and put it in his pocket. But much to the daughter's surprise, when her father's hand returned to view, in it was a pearl necklace. "Daughter, I wanted to give you this pearl necklace, but I couldn't give it to you while you were still clinging to childish things."

Much like the child with the plastic necklace, we hold on to things that we believe to have great value but are nothing more than children's toys. When we are willing to lay all that we have on the altar, as did Abraham, the Father will produce, from behind His back, the pearl necklace that He has been wanting so desperately to give us.

**1 Corinthians 13**

**11** When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

**Ephesians 4**

**11** And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

**12** For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

**13** Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

**14** That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

**15** But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

**16** From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

**17** This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

**18** Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

**19** Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

**20** But ye have not so learned Christ;

**21** If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

**22** That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

**23** And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

**24** And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

**25** Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

**26** Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

**27** Neither give place to the devil.

**28** Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

**29** Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

**30** And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

**31** Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

**32** And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

## The Parable of Counting the Cost of Building the Tower

**Luke 14 (JST)**

**26** If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, or husband, yea and his own life also; or in other words, is afraid to lay down his life for my sake, he cannot be my disciple.

**27** And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

**28** Wherefore, settle this in your hearts, that ye will do the things ***which I shall teach, and command you.***

**29** For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he have money to finish his work?

**30** Lest, unhappily, after he has laid the foundation and is not able to finish his work, all who behold begin to mock him,

**31** Saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish. And this he said, signifying there should not any man follow him unless he was able to continue, saying,

**32** Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him who cometh against him with twenty thousand;

**33** Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an embassage and desireth conditions of peace.

**34** So likewise, whosoever of you forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

**35** Then certain of them came to him, saying, Good Master, we have Moses and the prophets; and whosoever shall live by them, shall he not have life?

**36** And Jesus answered, saying, Ye know not Moses, neither the prophets; for if ye had known them, ye would have believed on me; for to this intent they were written. For I am sent that ye might have life. Therefore I will liken it unto salt which is good;

**37** But if the salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

**38** It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; men cast it out. He who hath ears to hear, let him hear. These things he said, signifying ***that which was written verily must all be fulfilled.***

**Luke 14:26. What Is Meant by the Word "Hate"?**

In the context of Luke 14:26, the Greek word translated as "hate" means to "love less" or "esteem less." The Savior was not revoking the commandment to "honour thy father and thy mother" (Exodus 20:12); ***He was teaching about priorities.*** For a disciple, devotion to family must come after devotion to Jesus Christ. For more information on these teachings, see the commentary for Matthew 10:34–37.

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

**Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 14:28. Live in Harmony with the Commandments**

While serving as a member of the Seventy, **Elder Larry W. Gibbons** explained that to be "settled" in the gospel requires a decision to live in total harmony with the commandments:

"In Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 14:28 [see Luke 14:27, footnote b] the Lord says: 'Wherefore, settle this in your hearts, that ye will do the things which I shall teach, and command you.' I love that phrase 'settle this.' Brothers and sisters, I pray that we are 'settled.' There are precious blessings that come only from the complete yielding of one's heart to God. …

"Now, young men and young women, as you begin ***to set your priorities in life,*** remember, the only true security in life is living the commandments. …

"… What a great thing it is to decide once and for all early in life what you will do and what you will not do with regards to honesty, modesty, chastity, the Word of Wisdom, and temple marriage.

"Brothers and sisters, stay on the straight and narrow path. No, stay in the *middle* of the straight and narrow path. Don't drift; don't wander; don't dabble; be careful.

"… Living the commandments will bring you the happiness that too many look for in other places" ("Wherefore, Settle This in Your Hearts," *Ensign* or *Liahona,* Nov. 2006, 103–4).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

**Matthew 5:13. "If the Salt Have Lost His Savour"**

In addition to its uses in flavoring and preserving food, salt was added to sacrificial offerings under the law of Moses. Thus salt was associated with joy, permanence, and covenant making. When Jesus admonished disciples to be the "salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13), part of the meaning was that their lives should reflect their covenants with the Lord and serve as a preservative for the world in general. **Elder Carlos E. Asay** (1926–99) of the Presidency of the Seventy explained that salt loses its savor by contamination and that we keep our "savor" by avoiding spiritual contamination. Though directed specifically to priesthood holders, Elder Asay's words have application to each of us:

"A world-renowned chemist told me that salt will not lose its savor with age. Savor is lost through mixture and contamination. Similarly, priesthood power does not dissipate with age; it, too, is lost through mixture and contamination.

"When a priesthood bearer mixes his speech with lies or profanity, he suffers a loss of savor.

"When one of us follows the crowd and becomes involved in immoral acts … he loses savor.

"Flavor and quality flee a man when he contaminates his mind with unclean thoughts, desecrates his mouth by speaking less than the truth, and misapplies his strength in performing evil acts. …

"I would offer these simple guidelines, especially to the young men, as the means to preserve one's savor: If it is not clean, do not think it; if it is not true, do not speak it; if it is not good, do not do it" ("Salt of the Earth: Savor of Men and Saviors of Men," *Ensign,* May 1980, 42–43).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

## The Parable of the 100 Sons

The good master of the house had an hundred sons. Two did the yard work, tried to do the work of the good master, shared freely with the other sons, etc. However, these two sons were rough around the edges. Eighty sons didn't do much of anything. They mostly enjoyed life, ate, drank, and were merry—they enjoyed the fruits of the labors of the two brothers! There were also eighteen sons that did nothing but complain about the two sons who were doing all the work. They complained about their behavior, faults, etc.—you name it!

When the good master of the house came to inspect, he found the two sons giving meat in due season, and he saith unto the two sons, "Well done thou good and faithful servants! You have been faithful over these few; I will make you ruler over many!"

Then the eighteen sons came up to the master of the house and saith unto him, "Lord, Lord, have we not in thy name done many wonderful works?"

And then the good master of the house professed unto them, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

# The Light of Christ, the Holy Ghost, Honesty, Etc.

## Introduction

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God; but we frequently see some of them, after suffering all they have for the work of God, will fly to pieces like glass as soon as anything comes that is contrary to their traditions: ***they cannot stand the fire at all.*** How many will be able to abide a celestial law, and go through and receive their exaltation, I am unable to say, as many are called, but few are chosen.
>
> ("Unwillingness of Saints to Learn," *TPJS,* p. 331)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

> BAPTISM OF FIRE.
>
> To gain salvation every accountable person must receive two baptisms. They are baptism of water ***and of the Spirit.*** (John 3:3–5.) The baptism of the Spirit is called the ***baptism of fire*** and of the ***Holy Ghost.*** (Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16; 2 Ne. 31:13–14; 3 Ne. 11:35; 12:1–2; Morm. 7:10; D. & C. 20:41; 33:11; 39:6.) By the power of the ***Holy Ghost***—who is the Sanctifier (3 Ne. 27:19–21)—dross, iniquity, carnality, sensuality, and every evil thing is ***burned out*** of the repentant soul as if by ***fire;*** the cleansed person becomes literally a new creature of the ***Holy Ghost.*** (Mosiah 27:24–26.) He is born again. The ***baptism of fire*** is not something in addition to the receipt of the ***Holy Ghost;*** rather, it is the actual enjoyment of the gift which is offered by the laying on of hands at the time of baptism. "Remission of sins," the Lord says, comes "by baptism and ***by fire,*** yea, even the ***Holy Ghost.***" (D. & C. 19:31; 2 Ne. 31 :17.) Those who receive the baptism of fire are ***"filled as if with fire."*** (Hela. 5 :45.)
>
> ("Baptism of Fire," *Mormon Doctrine,* p. 73)

I know that Joseph Smith was and is a prophet of God and that what he said was true. What Joseph Smith is saying here is confirmed in Isaiah:

**Isaiah 3 (2 Nephi 13)**

> **1** For behold, the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem, and from Judah, the stay and the staff, the whole staff of bread, and the whole stay of water,

**2 Nephi 13: 1 "The Stay and the Staff"**

> The necessities of bread and water will dwindle during the siege. "The stay and the staff" described in 2 Nephi 13:1 foreshadows a spiritual famine of those who reject the Lord, who is "the whole staff of bread"—the bread of life—and "the whole stay of water"—the living water.
>
> (*Book of Mormon Student Manual,* 2009, p. 76)

Saints will reject the whole staff of bread, the whole stay of water—celestial law—and the hope of this chapter, as well as this entire section *Zeal Without Knowledge,* is to help people find truth.

We learn from the Lord in Doctrine and Covenants that the wise virgins were not deceived because they took the Holy Spirit for their guide (D&C 45:57).

In this chapter, we will explain what the Light of Christ, the Holy Ghost, and the Second Comforter are. We will also lay out how tribalism, honesty, and the "covenant path" work into this same topic. Members' misconceptions about this topic give way to many of their confusions and ultimate apostasies. There are members today claiming to have felt the Spirit when listening to things that were blatantly untrue, while other members claim to have felt the Spirit leave, or felt the spirit of the devil or contention, when presented with the truth. If one had a fundamental understanding of the Light of Christ, the Holy Ghost, the Second Comforter, etc., one would reason the folly in the hereto mentioned conclusions.

**President Hunter** warned of a trend that he saw developing, a trend that was caused, or was a consequence of, members no longer taking the time to understand fundamental definitions and doctrines taught in the Lord's restored church.

> Let me offer a word of caution… I think if we are not careful…, we may begin to try to counterfeit the true influence of the Spirit of the Lord by unworthy and manipulative means. I get concerned when it appears that strong emotion or free-flowing tears are equated with the presence of the Spirit. Certainly the Spirit of the Lord can bring strong emotional feelings, including tears, but that outward manifestation ought not to be confused with the presence of the Spirit itself.
>
> (*The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter,* p. 184)

*Preach My Gospel* tacks on this clarifier to the end of that quote: "The Spirit of the Lord always edifies" (*PMG,* p. 99). May I be permitted by the angry masses to be here bold and proclaim matter-of-factly that President Hunter's fears have become a reality in the Church. As I have said, members are hearing verifiable lies and outright apostasy and claiming to feel the "Holy Ghost" when they do it. They are not feeling the Holy Ghost; they are following after strange spirits, and if they do not learn how to "hear Him," if they do not take the real Holy Ghost as their guide, they will be deceived.

Much like the earlier chapter dealing with *Zion, a City of Holiness, New Jerusalem,* a lot of members' confusion arises when they seek to combine these multiple cities that are named similarly into one lump and then try to make sense of it from there—the problem being that there are vast differences between those cities. Likewise, people combine the Light of Christ, the Holy Ghost, and the Second Comforter into one lump and then attempt to understand it. These three things are similar, but yet have vast differences.

## The Light of Christ

Non-members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints would simply know this as a conscience. And in every language, there is a word that describes this unknown (to them) entity, or ability for man to discern right from wrong.

**Moroni 7**

> **15** For behold, my brethren, it is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night.
>
> **16** For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.
>
> **17** But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; for after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him.
>
> **18** And now, my brethren, seeing that ye know the light by which ye may judge, which light is the light of Christ, see that ye do not judge

> wrongfully; for with that same judgment which ye judge ye shall also be judged.
>
> **19** Wherefore, I beseech of you, brethren, that ye should search diligently in the light of Christ that ye may know good from evil; and if ye will lay hold upon every good thing, and condemn it not, ye certainly will be a child of Christ.

Prophets have taught that the Light of Christ is given unto every man and that the heed one pays to it will determine the size of that fire burning within the individual. One can reach a point in time in which this spirit, or Light of Christ, ceases to strive within them (2 Ne. 26:11; Ether 2:15, 15:19; Moro. 8:28, 9:4; D&C 1:33). So when the scriptures say the spirit of the Lord ceased to strive with the wicked, this is obviously not talking about the Holy Ghost or gift of the Holy Ghost, for the wicked never had it.

Or, as **Bruce R. McConkie** stated:

> This is the Spirit which the Lord is withholding from wicked persons in the world (D&C 63:32), not the Holy Ghost which the world never had (John 14:17). That is, the Light of Christ ceases to strive with the wicked in that it no longer guides and entices them to seek gospel light and walk in the course that will prepare them to receive the gospel and all its saving truths (D&C 84:45–48).
>
> (*Mormon Doctrine,* p. 753)

The Light of Christ in an individual is what enables them to recognize the messengers of Christ and is what is responsible for feelings of goodwill, love, comfort, familiarity (i.e., "felt like family"), etc. The Light of Christ is very much in the heart of an individual, and it is a power that can enlighten the mind of man but does not act upon the intelligence of a man. There are many in the world who are extremely charitable in their actions who are not members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and thus do not have the gift of the Holy Ghost, but yet they feel the love of Christ "burning" within their bosom. There are many people in the world having "spiritual experiences"—in some cases truly profound, meaningful, and spiritual—but these experiences in themselves are not indications of anything more than the Light of Christ that is within them, or a temporary experience with the Holy Ghost.

The more an individual follows the path of Godly good, the brighter that flame, or Light of Christ, in that individual becomes, and the contrary is true for the path of wickedness or the natural man. By this light shall all mankind be judged, for if one was unwilling to follow this light, they would be unwilling to follow the higher light, or intelligence of the Father. This light is a preparatory light, a light that when heeded will bring somebody from a telestial sphere to a terrestrial sphere—and remember, all spheres of glory are spheres of intelligence (D&C 93:36).

Adam and Eve were in the garden not knowing good from evil (2 Nephi 2: 22–25), meaning they did not have the Light of Christ activated in them. Partaking of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, or the fruit which represented the love of God, i.e., the fruit of the Light of Christ, their eyes were opened and they knew good from evil (Moses 4:28). Subsequently, from that point on, Adam and Eve were enabled to have children, children being born with the Light of Christ, for we had the Light of Christ before we were born (D&C 93:23, 29–30; President Boyd K. Packer, "The Light of Christ," *Ensign,* Apr. 2005). Thus all the posterity of Adam can be held to account to a righteous judgement based on their adherence to that light.

## The "Feels"

**Galatians 5**

> **22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
>
> **23** Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.
>
> **24** And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.
>
> **25** If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

This is where the importance of the order in which the conclusion is arrived at becomes infinitely important. Does one feel good about something and then can safely arrive at the conclusion that said deed must have been from God, or must one first do and then judge the effects of the fruit?

For example, person one hears something, it makes them feel good, and they arrive at—"ergo it must be of God!" Using the same logic as person one, I could have sex with my next-door neighbor, it feels good in the moment, and I could arrive at the conclusion—"ergo it must be of God!" Obviously, that is not the way to use the Light of Christ.

Person two hears something, it makes them feel good, so they then act on that knowledge. Once the deed is done, they reflect on the deed and find the good feelings are no longer there, but guilt and remorse and emptiness are found, and they arrive at the conclusion—"ergo, that was not of God!"

We don't hear and judge on emotion, or Christ simply would have said so. Instead, we do what Christ counsels us to do:

**John 7**

> **16** Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.
>
> **17** If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

Moroni adds an additional layer to this while warning the Saints on how to properly utilize the Light of Christ in judging.

**Moroni 7**

> **5** For I remember the word of God which saith by their works ye shall know them; for if their works be good, then they are good also.
>
> **6** For behold, God hath said a man being evil cannot do that which is good; for if he offereth a gift, or prayeth unto God, except he shall do it with real intent it profiteth him nothing.
>
> **7** For behold, it is not counted unto him for righteousness.
>
> **8** For behold, if a man being evil giveth a gift, he doeth it grudgingly; wherefore it is counted unto him the same as if he had retained the gift; wherefore he is counted evil before God.
>
> **9** And likewise also is it counted evil unto a man, if he shall pray and not with real intent of heart; yea, and it profiteth him nothing, for God receiveth none such.
>
> **10** Wherefore, a man being evil cannot do that which is good; neither will he give a good gift.
>
> **11** For behold, a bitter fountain cannot bring forth good water; neither can a good fountain bring forth bitter water; wherefore, a man being a servant of the devil cannot follow Christ; and if he follow Christ he cannot be a servant of the devil.
>
> **12** Wherefore, all things which are good cometh of God; and that which is evil cometh of the devil; for the devil is an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually, and inviteth and enticeth to sin, and to do that which is evil continually.
>
> **13** But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God.
>
> **14** Wherefore, take heed, my beloved brethren, that ye do not judge that which is evil to be of God, or that which is good and of God to be of the devil.

Moroni here teaches that the motivation for the act is just as important than the act itself. A Grandmother doing Meals on Wheels for no other reason than to help people is of God, whereas members of other faiths doing deeds of service with the intent to increase the number of their flock is counted unto them evil. For as Nephi said, "There are only two churches, the Church of the Lamb of God and the Church of the Devil" (1 Nephi 14: 10), or as Jesus Christ himself said, "He that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad" (Matthew 12: 30). Meaning, if somebody in or outside the Church is attempting to circumvent the keys of God, it doesn't matter how "good you think you feel," you are heeding to the spirit of the devil. Moroni also gives another crucial point on how to discern in your life: "I remembered the word of God." Another example you can turn to for this is that of Alma.

**Mosiah 26**

> **33** And it came to pass when Alma had heard these words he wrote them down that he might have them, and that he might judge the people of that church according to the commandments of God.
>
> **34** And it came to pass that Alma went and judged those that had been taken in iniquity, ***according to the word of the Lord.***

So even with the Light of Christ, it is important to recognize that it is not as simple as "following your gut." You need to first seek truth to the best you are able to obtain it, then live according to the truth you've received, and finally, judge the fruits of your labors to make sure that you are in fact following the right spirit.

So we are born into this world, and we have the Light of Christ within us. What next?

## Tribalism

**Tribalism**

> trib•al•ism trī'bə-lĭz"əm
> n. The organization, culture, or beliefs of a tribe.
> n. A strong feeling of identity with and loyalty to one's tribe or group.
> n. The state of existing in separate tribes; tribal relation or feeling.
>
> Synonym: ***Religionism***
>
> (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language,* 5th Edition; *The Century Dictionary*)

**Abraham 3**

> **24** And there stood one among them that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him: We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell;
>
> **25** And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them;
>
> **26** And they who keep their first estate shall be added upon; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever.

**President Howard W. Hunter**

> I am privileged also to speak to many who are not members of our church and who may not be familiar with all of its doctrines and beliefs.
>
> Today, I would like to address both groups, members of our church as well as others, about one of the most important tenets of our faith and one of the most precious of God's gifts to mankind. It is our freedom, our agency, our inalienable and divine right to choose what we will believe and what we will not believe, and to choose what we want to be and what we want to do. I wish to speak of our responsibility and our opportunity to choose God, and the good, and eternal life; or to select evil, the destructive, and that which leads to painful misery and despair…
>
> We came to our mortality, like Jeremiah, known by God as his literal spirit children, having the privilege to choose our personal path on matters of belief and religious conviction. With Christ's triumph in heaven in overcoming Lucifer, and later his triumph on earth in overcoming the effects of Adam's fall and the death of all mankind, "the children of men" continue "free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not be acted upon. …
>
> "Wherefore, men are free … to choose liberty and eternal life, through [Christ] the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself" (2 Ne. 2:26–27).
>
> ("The Golden Thread of Choice," General Conference, October 1989)

Even though the choice of who we stand next to is one of the very first choices of any consequence we make, and even though it seems like simply a matter of personal preference, it does more to "prove" us than any other single choice. It determines where we are going as well as where we will end up.

**Elder Bednar** taught:

> How will I know where I'm going to go? I can answer that for you. You don't have to die to find out.
>
> If living the gospel for you is hard, if it's a chore. *"Uh, if I just wasn't a Latter-day Saint I could have fun."*
>
> If that's what you're like when you die, guess where you're going to go? With other people who feel the same way—because that's the law that you've learned to love.
>
> If during the course of your life, a little bit at a time, you have learned to love living the gospel, guess where you're going when you die?
>
> *With people who love living the gospel.*
>
> The Lord is not going to have to tell you when you come into His presence, you won't think, "Gee, I hope he's in a good mood today. I hope he gives me some extra points. So my grade will be a little bit better."
>
> When you come into His presence, you will go where you know you belong based on what we have desired to do and become while we have lived on the earth.
>
> If you can look your Bishop in the eye because you're worthy and clean, you already know what the day of judgment will be like.
>
> There's no awkwardness, no embarrassment, no shame. Living the gospel is not hard. Not living the gospel is what's hard. *And it is joyful to live it.*
>
> (Q&A with Elder Bednar, Chile, 23 February 2016)

**President Nelson** recently, in a heartfelt pleading, warned:

> … choose to believe in Jesus Christ. If you have doubts about God the Father and His Beloved Son or the validity of the Restoration or the veracity of Joseph Smith's divine calling as a prophet, choose to believe and stay faithful. Take your questions to the Lord and to other faithful sources. Study with the desire to believe rather than with the hope that you can find a flaw in the fabric of a prophet's life or a discrepancy in the scriptures. ***Stop increasing your doubts by rehearsing them with other doubters.*** Allow the Lord to lead you on your journey of spiritual discovery.
>
> ("Christ Is Risen; Faith in Him Will Move Mountains," General Conference, April 2021)

So how is it that we join God's tribe and stand with His people?

## Covenants

**Bible Dictionary: Covenant**

> Sometimes denotes an agreement between persons (1 Sam. 23:18) or nations (1 Sam. 11:1); more often between God and man; but in this latter case it is important to notice that the two parties to the agreement do not stand in the relation of independent and equal contractors. God in His good pleasure fixes the terms, which man accepts. The same word is sometimes rendered "testament."
>
> The gospel is so arranged that principles and ordinances are received by covenant, placing the recipient under strong obligation and responsibility to honor the commitment. Thus the severe consequences to Ananias and Sapphira, who deliberately broke their covenant and lied unto God (Acts 5:1–11).
>
> ("Covenant," *Bible Dictionary,* pp. 622–623)

**Exodus 19**

> **5** Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

The Lord separates His people from all people, forming a tribe or group, which becomes known as the "covenant people," and he does this through covenants! Covenants are between families, the Lord, and land.

**Exodus 23**

> **29** I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee.
>
> **30** By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land.
>
> **31** And I will set thy bounds from the Red sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the driver: for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before thee.
>
> **32** Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods.
>
> **33** They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin against me: for if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee.

**Numbers 24**

> **2** And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and the spirit of God came upon him.

**Ezekiel 45**

> **8** In the land shall be his possession in Israel: and my princes shall no more oppress my people; and the rest of the land shall they give to the house of Israel according to their tribes.

**Numbers 34**

> **18** And ye shall take one prince of every tribe, to divide the land by inheritance.

The Lord promises to wipe another group out as He increases His group. He then makes borders to separate these groups from each other. He says that His group won't make covenants, or promises, with the other group and warns them of the consequences of doing so. He even says they shouldn't allow them within their own borders. Tribalism.

**Judges 2**

> **1** And an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I sware unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you.

Once again, the Lord makes covenants with groups for specific pieces of land, and the Lord's promises cannot ever be broken on His end.

**Doctrine and Covenants 78**

> **11** Wherefore, a commandment I give unto you, to prepare and organize yourselves by a bond or everlasting covenant that cannot be broken.
>
> **12** And he who breaketh it shall lose his office and standing in the church, and shall be delivered over to the buffetings of Satan until the day of redemption.
>
> **13** Behold, this is the preparation wherewith I prepare you, and the foundation, and the ensample which I give unto you, whereby you may accomplish the commandments which are given you;
>
> **14** That through my providence, notwithstanding the tribulation which shall descend upon you, that the church may stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world;

**Doctrine and Covenants 54**

> **3** And if your brethren desire to escape their enemies, let them repent of all their sins, and become truly humble before me and contrite.
>
> **4** And as the covenant which they made unto me has been broken, even so it has become void and of none effect.
>
> **5** And wo to him by whom this offense cometh, for it had been better for him that he had been drowned in the depth of the sea.
>
> **6** But blessed are they who have kept the covenant and observed the commandment, for they shall obtain mercy.

**Doctrine and Covenants 84**

> **40** Therefore, all those who receive the priesthood, receive this oath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved.
>
> **41** But whoso breaketh this covenant after he hath received it, and altogether turneth therefrom, shall not have forgiveness of sins in this world nor in the world to come.
>
> **42** And wo unto all those who come not unto this priesthood which ye have received, which I now confirm upon you who are present this day, by mine own voice out of the heavens; and even I have given the heavenly hosts and mine angels charge concerning you.

**Doctrine and Covenants 131**

> **1** In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;
>
> **2** And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];
>
> **3** And if he does not, he cannot obtain it.
>
> **4** He may enter into the other, but that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase.

**Hebrews 7**

> **19** For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.
>
> **20** And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest: ...
>
> **28** For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

Breaking covenants makes all the promises void. Receiving the priesthood is received by oath, or covenant, and, like the covenant of marriage, is required to obtain the highest degree of the Celestial Kingdom. The law, or Word of the Lord, or *logos,* is not enough—we must promise, take an oath, a covenant, and then live it to become the sons of God.

**Alma 53**

> **11** And because of their oath they had been kept from taking up arms against their brethren; for they had taken an oath that they never would shed blood more; and according to their oath they would have perished; yea, they would have suffered themselves to have fallen into the hands of their brethren, had it not been for the pity and the exceeding love which Ammon and his brethren had had for them.

**Alma 24**

> **21** Now when the people saw that they were coming against them they went out to meet them, and prostrated themselves before them to the earth, and began to call on the name of the Lord; and thus they were in this attitude when the Lamanites began to fall upon them, and began to slay them with the sword.
>
> **22** And thus without meeting any resistance, they did slay a thousand and five of them; and we know that they are blessed, for they have gone to dwell with their God.
>
> **23** Now when the Lamanites saw that their brethren would not flee from the sword, neither would they turn aside to the right hand or to the left, but that they would lie down and perish, and praised God even in the very act of perishing under the sword—
>
> **24** Now when the Lamanites saw this they did forbear from slaying them; and there were many whose hearts had swollen in them for those of their brethren who had fallen under the sword, for they repented of the things which they had done.

When we truly come unto God, we realize the importance of making and keeping covenants as being central to our salvation. These people would rather die than break a promise and thus will inherit mercy and forgiveness and the kingdom of glory, while those who are oath breakers and liars will be "thrust down to hell" (2 Nephi 9: 34).

## Promises, Pledges, Bonds, Etc.

**1 Samuel 18**

> **3** Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

**2 Corinthians 8**

> **21** Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, ***but also in the sight of men.***

**1 Thessalonians 4**

> **12** That ***ye may walk honestly toward them that are without,*** and that ye may have lack of nothing.

**Romans 12**

> **16** Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.
>
> **17** Recompense to no man evil for evil. ***Provide things honest in the sight of all men.***

It is important to note that making promises and covenants does not only apply to the Lord. People can covenant with each other, and the Lord expects us to keep those promises. We can also covenant with the devil to obtain pieces of his power. Once again, we choose who to covenant with (tribalism), but we don't get to choose the consequences of our actions (hypocrisy, living one way but expecting to be treated as though you are living another way).

**Numbers 30**

> **2** If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.

**Doctrine and Covenants 136**

> **18** Zion shall be redeemed in mine own due time.
>
> **19** And if any man shall seek to build up himself, and seeketh not my counsel, he shall have no power, and his folly shall be made manifest.
>
> **20** Seek ye; ***and keep all your pledges one with another;*** …

**1 Nephi 4**

> **37** And it came to pass that when Zoram had made an oath unto us, our fears did cease concerning him.

A follower of God does what they say they will do. They make and keep their promises, pledges, and bonds to each other!

**Matthew 14**

> **6** But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.
>
> **7** Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.
>
> **8** And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.
>
> **9** And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.
>
> **10** And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.

Even evil men in the world understand the value of keeping their word and their promises!

## Walking the Covenant Path

**Church Website**

> Ever heard of the "covenant path"?
>
> Let's look at what that means.
>
> You might have heard leaders talk about the "covenant path" before. Here's what that means!
> - A "covenant" is a sacred promise between us and God. He sets the terms of the agreement and blesses us if we are faithful.
> - A "path" can mean a physical walkway, but that's not what we're talking about here. This path refers to the collection of ordinances that mark the way for us to return to Heavenly Father. These sacred acts are performed by the authority of the priesthood and are scattered throughout our lifetime.
>
> So what does "covenant path" mean? It means that our promises, paired with priesthood power, bring us back to Heavenly Father. The path includes:
> - Being baptized.
> - Receiving the Holy Ghost.
> - Going through the temple.
> - Being sealed in marriage.
>
> (*Gospel Living,* February 2, 2022, https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/inspiration/youve-probably-heard-the-phrase-covenant-path-before)

Ergo, "the covenant path" is simply a visual metaphor to describe the covenants that we make with the Lord that lead us back to His presence. So, if the actual path is making covenants, what would be "walking the covenant path"? Honesty. Making the covenants, saying the words, but then never actually *keeping* said covenants would make the covenant a lie—void! As we honestly keep our covenants, it is as though we are walking on a path that is leading back to Christ. If we walk on any path other than the "covenant path," it will not lead back to Christ, and if we don't actually walk on the path, we won't get anywhere.

It is important to note that every covenant, bond, pledge, promise, etc. is based entirely on honesty—even amongst the wicked. If those who made the pledges, bonds, etc. don't honestly keep and obey, then the pledge, bonds, etc. will be void, and that person's standing in the "tribe" will be called into question. Honesty, especially with the wicked, is still a trait highly sought after, with secret combinations punishing the dishonest with literal death. We should likewise treat the "covenant path" with such honesty.

## Honesty: More Important than We Realize

**Proverbs 12**

> **12** The wicked desireth the net of evil men: but the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit.
>
> **13** The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips: but the just shall come out of trouble.
>
> **14** A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth: and the recompence of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him.
>
> **15** The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.
>
> **16** A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame.
>
> **17** He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.
>
> **18** There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.
>
> **19** The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment.
>
> **20** Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counsellors of peace is joy.
>
> **21** There shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.
>
> **22** Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight.
>
> **23** A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.

What comes out of your mouth is more important than how it comes out. A fool cares about his own opinions, while the wise hearken to counsel, i.e., they listen. A fool's face is easily seen; he makes no attempt at hiding his foolishness, while the prudent keeps his shame in his own closet. Speaking truth shows one's righteousness, while speaking falsehoods and lies shows one's unrighteousness. Those who speak truths will be exalted and endure, while those of a lying tongue are but "for a moment," i.e., as I have always said, "some are called to endure, others to be endured." The wicked are full of mischief, or guile, etc. Lying lips are abominations to the Lord, while those who speak truth are loved of the Lord.

**Joseph Smith** said:

> I love that man better who swears a stream as long as my arm yet deals justice to his neighbors and mercifully deals his substance to the poor, than the long, smooth-faced hypocrite.
>
> ("The Prophet's Discourse from 2 Peter, First Chapter—Reproof of Self-Righteousness," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 303)

What one speaks is more important than how one speaks it.

**Luke 8**

> **11** Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.
>
> **12** Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.
>
> **13** They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.
>
> **14** And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.
>
> **15** But that on the good ground ***are they, which in an honest and good heart,*** having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.
>
> **16** No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.
>
> **17** For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.
>
> **18** Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

Firstly, the Lord is breaking up His Church into tribes, for all those who received the seed, which is "the word," received it through baptism. This is one of many cases where the Lord himself separated sections of His church into groups or groupings. Was the Lord wrong or evil for doing this? God forbid. We are to look at the different groups, judge them, ask ourselves "which group do we want to be in?" and then do what is required to be in that group. The huge difference between the different "spots of ground," i.e., "members of the church," is here identified as having "an honest and good heart." Honesty is key.

**2 Corinthians 4**

> **2** But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.
>
> **3** But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:
>
> **4** In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the flight of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.
>
> **5** For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.
>
> **6** For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
>
> **7** But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.
>
> **8** We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;
>
> **9** Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

God knows what it means to "[handle] the Word of God deceitfully" (2 Cor. 4:2), and so should we. When people do this, they literally blind their own eyes, they deafen their own ears, and the truth, the gospel, then becomes "hid to them that are lost." You can know the difference because one side "preaches not of themselves, but of Christ and His doctrine," i.e., "they preach no opinions but only Christ's doctrine." Those holding the truth of God in their hearts, not the opinions of men, will be troubled, perplexed, persecuted, and cast down, but they are not distressed, in despair, forsaken, or destroyed.

**2 Corinthians 13**

> **5** Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?
>
> **6** But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

**7** Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.

**8** For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

**9** For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, even your perfection.

**10** Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

If you are dishonest, the Lord is not in you. Sharpness in the Word of God is the power of Christ given to men for edification and not destruction; it's to prevent your destruction.

**Philippians 4**

**8** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

**Articles of Faith**

**13** We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul—We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.

**Temple Recommend Interview Questions**

**9.** Do you strive to be honest in all that you do?

("26.3.3.1 Temple Recommend Interview Questions," *General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*)

Being a dishonest person not only makes one unworthy of the Savior to be within us, but it also makes us unworthy to be within the Lord's house. Period.

**1 Peter 2**

**11** Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

**12** Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Dishonesty is connected to "lusts of the flesh," which is why you see it so often in adultery, priestcrafts, etc.

**Proverbs 16**

**8** Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right.

**13** Righteous lips are the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right.

Once again, better to speak less but honestly than more with dishonesty—what one speaks is more important than how or how much.

**Jacob 4**

**13** Behold, my brethren, he that prophesieth, let him prophesy to the understanding of men; for the Spirit speaketh the truth and lieth not. Wherefore, it speaketh of things as they really are, and of things as they really will be; wherefore, these things are manifested unto us plainly, for the salvation of our souls. But behold, we are not witnesses alone in these things; for God also spake them unto prophets of old.

**14** But behold, the Jews were a stiffnecked people; and they despised the words of plainness, and killed the prophets, and sought for things that they could not understand. Wherefore, because of their blindness, which blindness came by looking beyond the mark, they must needs fall; for God hath taken away his plainness from them, and delivered unto them many things which they cannot understand, because they desired it. And because they desired it God hath done it, that they may stumble.

The Spirit does not and cannot lie. Those who have "felt the Spirit" in a lie were following strange spirits. The admonition that honesty is also tied to plain speaking is laid out. Those who would rather hear evil, lies, or falsehoods spoken in a soft tongue have plainness removed from them, and they are left with things they cannot understand.

**Alma 7**

**20** I perceive that it has been made known unto you, by the testimony of his word, that he cannot walk in crooked paths; neither doth he vary from that which he hath said; neither hath he a shadow of turning from the right to the left, or from that which is right to that which is wrong; therefore, his course is one eternal round.

**21** And he doth not dwell in unholy temples; neither can filthiness or anything which is unclean be received into the kingdom of God; therefore I say unto you the time shall come, yea, and it shall be at the last day, that he who is filthy shall remain in his filthiness.

The Lord is perfectly honest. He only goes and does exactly where and what He has said He would go and do. Those who believe He does, can, or will do things differently than what He has promised are filthy, and the Lord cannot dwell in them. (This is taught by Joseph Smith in great detail in *Lectures on Faith*.)

**Alma 53**

**20** And they were all young men, and they were exceedingly valiant for courage, and also for strength and activity; but behold, this was not all—they were men who were true at all times in whatsoever thing they were entrusted.

**21** Yea, they were men of truth and soberness, for they had been taught to keep the commandments of God and to walk uprightly before him.

All of the attributes listed first were overshadowed by, and lesser in value and importance to, being "men of truth." ***Let that sink in.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 97**

**6** And to the residue of the school, I, the Lord, am willing to show mercy; nevertheless, there are those that must needs be chastened, and their works shall be made known.

**7** The ax is laid at the root of the trees; and every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire. I, the Lord, have spoken it.

**8** Verily I say unto you, all among them who know their hearts are honest, and are broken, and their spirits contrite, and are willing to observe their covenants by sacrifice—yea, every sacrifice which I, the Lord, shall command—they are accepted of me.

**9** For I, the Lord, will cause them to bring forth as a very fruitful tree which is planted in a goodly land, by a pure stream, that yieldeth much precious fruit.

**10** Verily I say unto you, that it is my will that a house should be built unto me in the land of Zion, like unto the pattern which I have given you.

The Lord promises mercy, but only after being chastened. If you don't produce good fruit during your chastening, you will be hewn down. The honest are identified as a major key to understand who will be in the land of Zion, i.e., the New Jerusalem.

## Honesty: Modern Witnesses

**Elder Richard J. Maynes**

> There is nothing more important than being true to the covenants we make with the Lord. Our eternal life depends on the principle of honesty. ...
>
> When we are honest with others we are keeping our covenants. When we keep our covenants we are being honest with the Lord. We cannot separate the two.
>
> ("The Eternal Importance of Honesty," *Ensign,* April 2010)

**Elder David B. Haight**

> The time is now to rededicate our lives to eternal ideals and values, to make those changes that we may need to make in our own lives and conduct to conform to the Savior's teachings.
>
> From the beginning to the end of His ministry, Jesus asked His followers to adopt new, higher standards in contrast to their former ways. As believers, they were to live by a spiritual and moral code that would separate them not only from the rest of the world but also even from some of their traditions. He asks nothing less of those who follow Him today.
>
> ***Do we really believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, and virtuous? On this test may hinge the survival of our society, our constitutional government, and our eternal salvation.***
>
> ("Ethics and Honesty," General Conference, October 1987)

**Elder Franklin D. Richards**

> Some people deal honestly because they are watched and are obliged to; but a truly honest man will do right because he loves righteousness and honesty the best. These things indicate greater things. It is said a straw will show the way the wind blows. If a man is willing to be dishonest, or to do anything or permit anything that will bring mischief upon you in your absence, your interests would not be safe in his hands. That spirit will lead him to persuade your wives and children away from you, when you are dead, if he can, or to let someone else do it unrebuked; and upon the same principle the spread of good and great things are made to depend and to bring their consequences.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Vol. 5, Discourse 10, March 22, 1857)

**Elder Mark E. Petersen**

> Honesty is as basic to true Christianity as baptism or the resurrection of the dead. It is the foundation of all character development. Just as no man can see the kingdom of heaven without baptism, as explained by the Savior (John 3:3–5), so it may be said with equal truth that no dishonest man, except he repents, can see the kingdom of heaven.
>
> ("We Believe in Being Honest," *Conference Report,* October 1966, p. 105)

**Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin**

> If we are without guile, we are honest, true, and righteous. All of these are attributes of Deity and are required of the Saints. Those who are honest are fair and truthful in their speech, straightforward in their dealings, free of deceit, and above stealing, misrepresentation, or any other fraudulent action. Honesty is of God and dishonesty of the devil; the devil was a liar from the beginning. Righteousness is living a life that is in harmony with the laws, principles, and ordinances of the gospel. ...
>
> Of far greater concern than the outward acts of guile are the inner feelings and the attitudes that motivate them. ...The objective often is to get gain or to profit, regardless of the injury, loss, or damage to others. This attitude is totally contrary to the principles of the gospel. It hinders or thwarts the spiritual progress of anyone afflicted by it. The practice of guile prevents the Holy Ghost from prompting, guiding, and instructing us, leaving us ever more susceptible to the buffetings of Satan. When we break the commandments, we close ourselves to God's influence and open ourselves to Satan's influence.
>
> If we practice guile in small matters, we soon can find ourselves entangled in an ever-increasing, unending spiral, because each lie or other deception often requires a larger one to cover the first. Moreover, the practice of guile often leads to hypocrisy, which is the false pretense of virtue or righteousness and pretending to be something that we are not. If we know what is right and profess to live by that knowledge but, in fact, do not, we are hypocrites. ...
>
> "There were no robbers, nor murderers, ... but they were in one, the children of Christ, and heirs to the kingdom of God."
>
> ("Without Guile," General Conference, April 1988)

**Elder Mark E. Peterson**

> Honesty is a principle of salvation in the kingdom of God. Without it there can be no salvation...Dishonesty is directly related to selfishness, which is its origin and source. Selfishness is at the root of nearly all the disorders that afflict us, and man's inhumanity to man continues to make countless thousands mourn...Most of us claim to be Christians, bearing the name of Christ and worshiping in his holy name. But are we really Christians at heart? Is our worship truly acceptable to him? This we may determine by asking if we truly keep his commandments. If not, are we worthy to bear his name?...Christians must learn that there is nothing Christlike in deception. There is no righteousness in hypocrisy. There is nothing good about a lie...We must recognize that if we are not honest we are not clean, in the eyes of God, and that no unclean thing may enter his presence. To resort to dishonest practices is to apostatize from the Christian way of life. Apostasy from Christ becomes anti-Christ, and who among us can afford that? To be anti-Christ is to be against him, to fight against him, even in silent disobedience. To fight against Christ is to put God out of our lives, and that above all things invites self-destruction.
>
> ("Honesty, a Principle of Salvation," General Conference, October 1971)

**Brigham Young**

> We need to learn, practice, study, know, and understand how angels live with each other. When this community comes to the point to be perfectly honest and upright, you will never find a poor person: none will lack; all will have sufficient. Every man, woman, and child will have all they need just as soon as they all become honest. When the majority of a community are dishonest, it maketh the honest portion poor, for the dishonest serve and enrich themselves at their expense. You know that I think that this people are the best people that there are; yet we need to train ourselves, to study ourselves, and study the principles of truth and righteousness, until we can discern that which is right from that which is wrong in the least particular within ourselves; and you will find that to answer every purpose, without judging our neighbors as much as many do.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 6, Discourse 11, p. 76)

**President David O. McKay**

> Let us live honest, sincere lives. Let us be honest with ourselves, honest with our brethren, honest with our families, honest with men with whom we deal—always honest; for eyes are upon us, ***and the foundation of all character rests upon the principles of honesty and sincerity.***
>
> (*Conference Report,* Oct. 1967, p. 97)

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

> How rare a gem, how precious a jewel is the man or woman in whom there is neither guile nor deception nor falsehood! ... Where there is honesty, other virtues will follow.
>
> ("'An Honest Man—God's Noblest Work,'" *Conf. Rep.,* Apr. 1976, p. 93)

**Gospel Principles**

***Complete honesty is necessary for our salvation.*** President Brigham Young said, "If we accept salvation on the terms it is offered to us, we have got to be honest in every thought, in our reflections, in our meditations, in our private circles, in our deals, in our declarations, and in every act of our lives" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* [1997], 293).

("Chapter 31: Honesty," *Gospel Principles,* p. 179)

**Neil L. Andersen**

The Savior constantly rebuked those who professed one thing publicly but lived differently in their hearts (see Matthew 23:27). He praised those who lived without deception (see D&C 124:15). Can you see the contrasting difference? On one hand there is lying, deceiving, hypocrisy, and darkness. On the other hand there is truth, light, honesty, and integrity. The Lord draws a sharp distinction....***To constantly receive the Spirit of Truth—the Holy Ghost—we must fill our lives with truth and honesty.*** As we become completely honest, our spiritual eyes are opened to increased enlightenment.

("Honesty–The Heart of Spirituality," BYU devotional, Sept. 13, 2011)

**D&C 97:21. "Verily, ... for This Is Zion—the Pure in Heart"**

Zion is not only a location but a condition as well. The Lord declares that a person worthy of Zion is one who is "pure in heart" (D&C 97:21). Hyrum Smith described Zion as "the honest and pure in heart that will harken to the everlasting covenant" (in *History of the Church,* 6:320).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition), 2001, p. 230)

## Hypocrites, Liars, and Cheats

**Hypocrite**

The word generally denotes one who pretends to be religious when he is not (though it is sometimes used to mean simply a bad man; see Job 8:13; 13:16; Isa. 9:17; 33:14). Hypocrisy was the besetting sin of the Pharisees and was severely condemned by the Lord (Matt. 23:13–33; Mark 12:38–40; Luke 11:37–44; 20:46–47).

("Hypocrite," *Bible Dictionary,* p. 662)

**2 Nephi 9**

**34** Wo unto the liar, for he shall be thrust down to hell.

**3 Nephi 21**

**14** Yea, wo be unto the Gentiles except they repent; for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Father...

**19** ... that all lyings, and deceivings, and envyings, and strifes, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, shall be done away.

**20** For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel;

**21** And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.

**Revelation 3**

**15** I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

**16** So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

**17** Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

**18** I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

**19** As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

**20** Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

**21** To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

**22** He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

A hypocrite at their core is a liar. There are sets of rules for others that don't apply to themself. There are standards that apply to others but not themself. A hypocrite is someone who doesn't live the "golden rule"—they are a respecter of persons, almost always putting themselves and their family above others.

**Matthew 24**

**45** Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

**46** Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

**47** Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

**48** But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

**49** And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

**50** The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

**51** And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

## The Holy Ghost: Presence

First, let's start with the presence of the Holy Ghost before we get into the gift of the Holy Ghost. And let's start with Joseph Smith.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

There is a difference between the Holy Ghost and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Cornelius received the Holy Ghost before he was baptized, which was the convincing power of God unto him of the truth of the Gospel, but he could not receive the gift of the Holy Ghost until after he was baptized. Had he not taken this sign or ordinance upon him, the Holy Ghost which convinced him of the truth of God, would have left him. Until he obeyed these ordinances and received the gift of the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of hands, according to the order of God, he could not have healed the sick or commanded an evil spirit to come out of a man, and it obey him; for the spirits might say unto him, as they did to the sons of Sceva: "Paul we know and Jesus we know, but who are ye?" It mattereth not whether we live long or short on the earth after we come to a knowledge of these principles and obey them unto the end. I know that all men will be damned if they do not come in the way which He hath opened, and this is the way marked out by the word of the Lord.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 199)

The Holy Ghost has many purposes and functions; the first purpose, however, non-members of the Church can experience in their lives as Joseph Smith described above (and this will become more apparent as we continue).

**Bible Dictionary: Holy Ghost**

> The Holy Ghost is manifested to men on the earth both as the *power* of the Holy Ghost and as the *gift* of the Holy Ghost. The power can come upon one before baptism and is the convincing witness that the gospel is true. By the power of the Holy Ghost a person receives a testimony of Jesus Christ and of His work and the work of His servants upon the earth. The gift can come only after proper and authorized baptism and is conferred by the laying on of hands, as in Acts 8:12–25 and Moroni 2.
>
> ("Holy Ghost," *Bible Dictionary,* pp. 660–661)

**Joseph F. Smith**

> By means of this Spirit every man is enlightened, the wicked as well as the good, the intelligent and the ignorant, the high and the low, each in accordance with his capacity to receive the light; and this Spirit or influence which emanates from God may be said to constitute man's consciousness, and will never cease to strive with man, until man is brought to the possession of the higher intelligence which can only come through faith, repentance, baptism for the remission of sins, and the gift or the presentation of the Holy Ghost by one having authority.
>
> (*Gospel Doctrine,* p.62; or *Improvement Era,* Vol. 12, p. 389, March 1909)

## Holy Ghost: Convincing Power

The Holy Ghost is not a chemical response; it is a power of convincing to a higher intelligence (terrestrial to celestial). If man had to be baptized and confirmed before they experience this, then no man could be convinced. One using the Light of Christ properly will be led to further truth (telestial to terrestrial) and thus to the messengers of truth. The messengers' power to convince is wielded through the Holy Ghost.

**Preach My Gospel** counsels:

> Learn to rely on the Spirit to give you what you should say and do. By studying, developing, and using the teachings skills in this chapter, you will become a more capable instrument in the hands of the Lord. The Spirit will draw upon the knowledge and skills you have developed to help you teach more powerfully. The quality and power of your teaching will help others understand and feel the importance the restored gospel has for them. Their understanding will be influenced by your personal worthiness. Their understanding will also be influenced by how well you focus your attention on them, by how well you explain the gospel, use the scriptures, share your testimony, ask questions, and invite them to make and keep commitments.
>
> (*Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service,* 2004, p. 176)

And it says in **D&C 11:21**:

> **21** Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men.

There are a lot of members who will say things such as, "The Holy Ghost did all the work; I did nothing!" This couldn't be further from the truth. Also, take note once again of the word "convincing." Your ability as a messenger of Christ to produce fruit, i.e., baptisms and converts, is just as important for the Lord to allow to play out, so that the righteous can discern between what is right and what is wrong, as it is for the Lord to allow the foolish man to build on the sand and have his house washed away. If the Lord rewarded everyone the same regardless of our actions, how could we judge by the fruits of said actions? If the Lord rewarded all missionaries equally regardless of study, dedication, worthiness, diligence, etc., how would we be able to judge and discern? We would not!

The Holy Ghost is a convincer with the end goal always being that of understanding and bringing you to, as **President Joseph F. Smith** said, "the higher intelligence" (*Gospel Doctrine,* 5th ed., pp. 61–62). The Light of Christ can and will be used as a preparatory witness or a second witness to cause your heart to burn—how does it convince the mind?

**D&C 9**

> **9** But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong; …

**Doctrine and Covenants 8** (See also D&C 8:1–3, 46:7; Matt. 7:7–8; James 1:5)

> **2** Yea, behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart.
>
> **3** Now, behold, this is the spirit of revelation; …

## Holy Ghost: Gift Of

**Elder Robert D. Hales**

> By using the Light of Christ to discern and choose what is right, we can be led to an even greater light: the gift of the Holy Ghost. I testify that through the Restoration of the gospel and the holy priesthood of God, disciples of Jesus Christ in these latter days have the power to give the gift of the Holy Ghost. It is bestowed by the laying on of hands by those who have the authority of the priesthood, and it is received by those who have followed the principles of faith and repentance and have received the ordinance of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins.
>
> The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead, a personage of spirit. He is the Comforter, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit of Promise. He testifies of Jesus Christ, His work, and the work of His servants upon the earth. He acts as a cleansing agent to purify and sanctify us from sin. He comforts us and brings peace to our soul. The right to His constant companionship is among the greatest gifts we can receive in mortality, for by the light of His promptings and His cleansing power, we can be led back into the presence of God.
>
> ("Out of Darkness into His Marvelous Light," Gen. Conf., Apr. 2002)

**Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin**

> The Light of Christ should not be confused with the personage of the Holy Ghost, for the Light of Christ is not a personage at all. Its influence is preliminary to and preparatory to one's receiving the Holy Ghost. The Light of Christ will lead the honest soul to "hearkeneth to the voice" to find the true gospel and the true Church and thereby receive the Holy Ghost.
>
> The Holy Ghost is a personage of Spirit, a separate and distinct member of the Godhead. He is a witness or testifier of the power of God, the divinity of Christ, and the truth of the restored gospel. Many throughout history in all nations have sought diligently to commune with the heavens and gain the light of gospel truth. They have felt the influence of the Holy Ghost confirm the truth of the gospel.
>
> ("The Unspeakable Gift," General Conference, April 2003)

## Holy Ghost: Spirit of Promise

The Holy Ghost, also known as the Holy Spirit of Promise, seals ordinances.

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** summarized this perfectly:

> The Holy Spirit of Promise is the Holy Spirit promised the saints, or in other words the Holy Ghost. This name-title is used in connection with the sealing and ratifying power of the Holy Ghost, that is, the power given him to ratify and approve the righteous acts of men so that those acts will be binding on earth and in heaven. "All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations," must be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, if

they are to have "efficacy, virtue, or force in and after the resurrection from the dead; for all contracts that are not made unto this end have an end when men are dead." (D&C 132:7).

To seal is to ratify, to justify, or to approve. Thus an act which is sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise is one which is ratified by the Holy Ghost; it is one which is approved by the Lord; and the person who has taken the obligation upon himself is justified by the Spirit in the thing he has done. The ratifying seal of approval is put upon an act only if those entering the contract are worthy as a result of personal righteousness to receive the divine approbation. They "are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which the Father sheds forth upon all those who are just and true." (D&C 76:53) If they are not just and true and worthy the ratifying seal is withheld.

When any ordinance or contract is sealed by the Spirit, it is approved with a promise of reward, provided unrighteousness does not thereafter break the seal, remove the ratifying approval, and cause loss of the promised blessing. (*Doctrines of Salvation,* vol. 1 p. 55; vol. 2 p. 94–99). Seals are placed on contracts through righteousness.

The operation and power of the Holy Spirit of Promise is best illustrated by the ordinance and contract of baptism. An unworthy candidate for baptism might deceive the elders and get the ordinance performed, but no one can lie to the Holy Ghost and get by undetected. Accordingly, the baptism of an unworthy and unrepentant person would not be sealed by the Spirit; it would not be ratified by the Holy Ghost; the unworthy person would not be justified by the Spirit in his actions. If thereafter he became worthy through personal repentance and obedience, the seal would then be put in force. Similarly, if a worthy person is baptized, with the ratifying approval of the Holy Ghost attending the performance, yet the seal may be broken by subsequent sin.

These principles also apply to every other ordinance and performance in the Church. Thus if both parties are "just and true", if they are worthy, a ratifying seal is placed on their temple marriage; if they are unworthy, they are not justified by the Spirit and the ratification of the Holy Ghost is withheld. Subsequent worthiness will put the seal in force, and unrighteousness will break any seal.

Even if a person progresses to that state of near-perfection in which his calling and election is made sure, in which he is "sealed up unto eternal life" (D&C 131:5, 132:18–26), in which he receives "the promise … of eternal life" (D&C 88:3–4) in which he is "sealed up unto the day of redemption" (D&C 124:124, Eph. 1:13) – yet with it all, these great promises are secured only if the "performances" are sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise.

("Holy Spirit of Promise," *Mormon Doctrine,* pp. 361–362)

## The Holy Ghost: Purifier and Sanctifier

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

… the effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile, is to purge out the old blood, and make him actually of the seed of Abraham. That man that has none of the blood of Abraham (naturally) must have a new creation by the Holy Ghost. In such a case, there may be more of a powerful effect upon the body, and visible to the eye, than upon an Israelite, while the Israelite at first might be far before the Gentile in pure intelligence.

("The Two Comforters," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 150)

**Bible Dictionary: Holy Ghost**

For those who receive this gift, the Holy Ghost acts as a cleansing agent to purify them and sanctify them from all sin. Thus it is often spoken of as "fire" (Matt. 3:11; 2 Ne. 31:17; D&C 19:31).

("Holy Ghost," *Bible Dictionary,* p. 661)

**Elder Kevin R. Duncan**

### The Holy Ghost Is a Sanctifier

I have always found great strength and understanding in the following quote by **Elder Orson Pratt** (1811–81) as it relates to the role of the Holy Ghost as our sanctifier:

"Water Baptism is only a preparatory cleansing of the believing penitent; it is only a condition of a cleansing from sin; whereas, the Baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost cleanses more thoroughly, by renewing the inner man, and by purifying the affections, desires, and thoughts which have long been habituated in the impure ways of sin. Without the aid of the Holy Ghost, a person … would have but very little power to change his mind … and to walk in newness of life. Though his sins may have been cleansed away, yet so great is the force of habit, that he would, without being renewed by the Holy Ghost, be easily overcome, and contaminated again by sin. Hence, it is infinitely important that the affections and desires should be, in a measure, changed and renewed, so as to cause him to hate that which he before loved, and to love that which he before hated: to thus renew the mind of man is the work of the Holy Ghost."

("The Sacred Roles of the Holy Ghost," *Ensign,* October 2014)

**Elder D. Todd Christofferson**

In all the ordinances, especially those of the temple, we are endowed with power from on high. This "power of godliness" comes in the person and by the influence of the Holy Ghost. The gift of the Holy Ghost is part of the new and everlasting covenant. It is an essential part of our baptism, the baptism of the Spirit. It is the messenger of grace by which the blood of Christ is applied to take away our sins and sanctify us (see 2 Nephi 31:17).

("The Power of Covenants," General Conference, April 2009)

**3 Nephi 27**

**20** Now this is the commandment: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day.

**Bruce R. McConkie**

Baptism is in water and of the Spirit and is preceded by repentance. The actual cleansing of the soul comes when the Holy Ghost is received. The Holy Ghost is a sanctifier whose divine commission is to burn dross and evil out of a human soul as though by fire, thus giving rise to the expression baptism of fire, which is the baptism of the Spirit. Forgiveness is assured when the contrite soul receives the Holy Spirit, because the Spirit will not dwell in an unclean tabernacle.

(*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith,* p. 239)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

How can men become clean and pure? How can they be sanctified? What power can burn dross and evil out of a human soul as though by fire? To be saved men must be born again; they must be sanctified by the Spirit; they must receive the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost; they must become clean and spotless by obedience to law. The Holy Ghost is a sanctifier; no man can be saved unless he receives the gift of the Holy Ghost.

(*The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary,* 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1979–1981], 4: 383)

How many times did Joseph Smith use the word *feelings* to describe this process? How many times was it described as a feel-good, happy emotion? How many times was this process taught as a warm blanket, full of love? Zero. Because that is not the purifying and sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost.

Joseph Smith describes it as "purging." What does your body do when it is purging? It is vomiting and diarrhea and fevers etc.—not pleasant or comfortable experiences. We purge poison out of a body with an anti-venom, and it is also an extremely painful process. People who allow the Holy Ghost to work on them know that it can be a very uncomfortable experience, as the Holy Ghost reveals to you your weaknesses and faults, etc. The act of learning, line upon line, precept upon precept, and thus increasing your intellect is also for many people an uncomfortable experience. When I hear members describe their experiences—not with the Light of Christ, but rather the Holy Ghost purifying them—as being rainbows, sparkles and butterflies, to me it is like looking at an individual who is morbidly obese sharing their wonderful experiences at the gym. "I love to go to the gym. I have been going for years! I just feel so warm and welcome and accepted there." I just look at the individual and think, you got the invitation, you got the Light of Christ, you have been given the gift of the Holy Ghost, but you have not received it; you don't even know what it is, any more than individuals standing around completely out of shape in a gym understand the function of a gym.

## Holy Ghost: Light of Christ Igniter

The Holy Ghost—as a convincer, comforter, as well as teacher—has the power to ignite the Light of Christ in your heart and cause your bosom to burn. This is ***not*** a guarantee, and the effect will be directly proportionate to the degree that the Light of Christ dwells in that individual. Meaning those drenched in sin will have less of an effect vs. those who have fostered the Light of Christ within them.

**President Kim B. Clark**

> That is precisely the great promise of discipleship. If you are true and faithful to your covenants, the Holy Ghost will ignite the Light of Christ within you. And then comes this marvelous promise: "… he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day.
>
> ("A Light to the World," BYU–Idaho Commencement, Dec. 20, 2006)

**President Boyd K. Packer**

> Then the Light of Christ can be ignited by the Spirit of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. We are told that then "the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26).
>
> ("The Light of Christ," *Ensign,* April 2005)

**Brent Bulloch**

> The Holy Ghost makes use of the Light of Christ to perform his work. "The Spirit of Christ (or Light of Christ) is the agency through which the Holy Ghost operates," Elder McConkie explained. (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith, p. 258) Moroni wrote that all spiritual gifts come through the Spirit of Christ, meaning that when the Holy Ghost works with us, he transmits his gifts by the agency of the light of Christ. ..Since the Holy Ghost uses the Spirit of Christ or Light of Christ to minister to the Saints of God, the term "Spirit of Christ" is sometimes used to refer to the Holy Ghost's ministration through that Spirit.
>
> ("What is the difference between the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Christ, and the Light of Christ?" *Ensign,* June 1989)

Going back to the quote shared at the start of this chapter from **President Hunter:**

> Let me offer a word of caution…I think if we are not careful…, we may begin to try to counterfeit the true influence of the Spirit of the Lord by unworthy and manipulative means. I get concerned when it appears that strong emotion or free-flowing tears are equated with the presence of the Spirit. Certainly the Spirit of the Lord can bring strong emotional feelings, including tears, but that outward manifestation ought not to be confused with the presence of the Spirit itself.
>
> (*The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter,* p. 184)

The Holy Ghost "can bring strong emotional feelings," meaning the Holy Ghost has the capacity to ignite the Light of Christ or act upon it within an individual, but those emotions all by themselves should not be confused with the presence of the Spirit itself. The Holy Ghost can act upon the Light of Christ within us, which will yield the fruits of the Spirit for specific purposes, and those purposes are always edification, for "the spirit always edifies" (*PMG,* p. ). So, if we have strong emotions and are also edified—have been taught by the Spirit—we may know we have had the Holy Ghost act upon the Light of Christ within us. If, however, we have not been taught, we have not been edified, etc. and we have experienced these emotions, we may know it was not the presence of the Spirit which caused it. The overwhelming majority of experiences with the Holy Ghost will not involve the Light of Christ being activated; the overflowing of emotion that is common amongst the Saints is simply an abundance of passion, or frankly, emotional incontinence.

## The Holy Ghost: Pure Intelligence

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> There are two Comforters spoken of. One is the Holy Ghost, the same as given on the day of Pentecost, and that all Saints receive after faith, repentance, and baptism. This first Comforter or Holy Ghost ***has no other effect than pure intelligence.*** It is more powerful in expanding the mind, enlightening the understanding, and storing the intellect with present knowledge, of a man who is of the literal seed of Abraham, than one that is a Gentile, though it may not have half as much visible effect upon the body; for as the Holy Ghost falls upon one of the literal seed of Abraham, it is calm…
>
> ("The Two Comforters," *TPJS,* pp. 149–150)

The Holy Ghost acts upon the intelligence. The Light of Christ does not do this. If the thought is not of God, then you will have a stupor of thought (D&C 9:9); it will be removed from your mind. Sometimes you will even forget the question before you ask it. If the thought is of God, your mind will catch hold to it, and the more you think about it, the more enlightening it becomes to the mind. This allows non-members and members to confirm truth, or in the words of Moroni, "by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things" (Moro. 10:5). Without the gift of the Holy Ghost, the influence of the Holy Ghost will depart.

So what is the influence of the Holy Ghost that is obtained after the gift of the Holy Ghost? Is it a feeling? Is it an emotion? The answer to these is no. Members have confused the power of the Holy Ghost to activate the Light of Christ in an individual, which caused their bosom to burn, with that of the influence and effects of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost, or the influence or power of the Holy Ghost, is used to edify and convince us, but the gift of the Holy Ghost is to have an actual effect upon the intelligence of an individual. If you are heeding the Holy Ghost and following it, if you truly are "hearing Him," you should be getting smarter.

## The Holy Ghost: Hear Him

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> The Spirit of Revelation is in connection with these blessings. A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation; for instance, when you feel ***pure intelligence*** flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas, so that by noticing it, you may find it fulfilled the same day or soon; (i.e.,) those things that were presented unto your minds by the Spirit of God, will come to pass; and thus by learning

> the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus.
>
> ("The Spirit of Revelation," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 151)

Joseph Smith taught that as you catch hold of these inspirations in your mind—thoughts that have appeared in your mind that you know weren't your own thoughts—as you record and follow through on those thoughts, you will then be able to see the fruit. The more you do, the better you will get at receiving the revelation from the Holy Ghost, learning line upon line, purging the old blood out from you, increasing your intellect, etc.

Now, when we hear something and our mind catches hold to it and something tells us, "this is true and it applies to you," and that thought is a very unpleasant thought, we can either a) get defensive and reject the Holy Ghost or b) humble ourselves and allow the Holy Ghost to purge off pieces of ourselves that are holding us back.

We read from Nephi that God's great and marvelous work "shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or the other—either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the ***blindness of their minds*** unto their being brought down into captivity, and also into destruction, both temporally and spiritually, according to the captivity of the devil" (1 Nephi 14:7).

Our ability to "hear Him" will determine everything. My belief, which I believe is backed up with all these scriptures, is that members are failing to "hear Him" because of their ignorance. They don't know what the Light of Christ is, what the Holy Ghost is, etc., so how can they recognize it, let alone know where to search for it? The angel once again used the word "convincing" to get people to peace and life eternal. You don't feel "feelings" that lead you to peace and life eternal. If your understanding of that is backwards, then your viewpoint is no different than that of pleasure seekers in the world who say, "how could something that feels so good, feels so right, not be of God?" The righteous of every age hear that all the time. Their problem and our problem as members is that we haven't taken the time to learn.

**Hebrews 4**

> **12** For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

The Holy Ghost, the convincing power and intelligence of God, is like that of the sun. The effects of the sun on wax would be to melt the wax. The effects of the sun on mud would be to dry it out and harden it. It is the same sun. It has the same effects. It is not the sun's fault that the mud hardened and became brittle, while the wax melted. It is our choice whether or not we will become wax or become mud, but what we don't get to do is—after the words of God, after the Holy Ghost, after the effects of the sun dry us out and make us brittle and angry—blame the sun, blame the word of God or the messengers of God, etc.

**Doctrine and Covenants 84**

> **48** And the Father teacheth him of the covenant which he has renewed and confirmed upon you, which is confirmed upon you for your sakes, and not for your sakes only, but for the sake of the whole world.
>
> **49** And the whole world lieth in sin, and groaneth under darkness and under the bondage of sin.
>
> **50** And by this you may know they are under the bondage of sin, because they come not unto me.
>
> **51** For whoso cometh not unto me is under the bondage of sin.
>
> **52** And whoso receiveth not my voice is not acquainted with my voice, and is not of me.
>
> **53** ***And by this you may know the righteous from the wicked,*** and that the whole world groaneth under sin and darkness even now.
>
> **54** And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—
>
> **55** Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation.
>
> **56** And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all.
>
> **57** And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written—
>
> **58** That they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom; otherwise there remaineth a scourge and judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion.
>
> **59** For shall the children of the kingdom pollute my holy land? Verily, I say unto you, Nay.
>
> **60** Verily, verily, ***I say unto you who now hear my words, which are my voice,*** blessed are ye inasmuch as you receive these things;
>
> **61** For I will forgive you of your sins with this commandment—that you remain steadfast in your minds in solemnity and the spirit of prayer, in bearing testimony to all the world of those things which are communicated unto you. ...
>
> **77** And again I say unto you, my friends, for from henceforth I shall call you friends, it is expedient that I give unto you this commandment, that ye become even as my friends in days when I was with them, traveling to preach the gospel in my power; ...
>
> **79** Behold, I send you out to prove the world, and the laborer is worthy of his hire.
>
> **80** And any man that shall go and preach this gospel of the kingdom, and fail not to continue faithful in all things, shall not be weary in mind, neither darkened, neither in body, limb, nor joint; and a hair of his head shall not fall to the ground unnoticed. And they shall not go hungry, neither athirst.

"By this you may know they are under ... sin, ... they come not unto me" (D&C 84:50). What does it mean to come unto the Lord? It is to let God prevail; it is to be "Israel," which is what it means to "hear Him." To "hear Him" is to understand His doctrine, the doctrine taught in the Lord's restored church, and cling to it. If one does this, they "let God prevail" in their lives; if they "lean unto their own understanding," if they lean unto their own *opinions,* they do not "let God prevail" and have not "come unto Christ" and thus are "under sin." The Lord also says crystal clear that those who are "not acquainted with [His] voice" are not acquainted with Him (D&C 84:52), but what is the Lord's voice? This is ***crucial*** for us to understand. The Lord says here, "I say unto you who now hear my ***words***, which are my ***voice***" (D&C 84:60).

**Doctrine and Covenants 35**

> **20** And a commandment I give unto thee—that ***thou shalt write*** for him; and ***the scriptures*** shall be given, ***even as they are in mine own bosom, to the salvation of mine own elect;***
>
> **21** ***For they will hear my voice,*** and shall see me, and shall not be asleep, and shall abide the day of my coming; for they shall be purified, even as I am pure.

**Doctrine and Covenants 18**

> **33** And I, Jesus Christ, your Lord and your God, have spoken it.
>
> **34** ***These words*** are not of men nor of man, but of me; wherefore, you shall testify they are of me and not of man;

> **35** For it is ***my voice*** which speaketh them unto you; for they are given by my Spirit unto you, and by my power ***you can read them one to another;*** and save it were by my power you could not have them;
>
> **36** Wherefore, ***you can testify that you have heard my voice,*** and know my words.

**Elder Richard G. Scott**

> Our Father in Heaven has given us tools to help us come unto Christ and [hear Him]… [One such] tool is to study the word of God in the scriptures and the words of the living prophets. We talk to God through prayer. He most often communicates back to us through His written word. To know what the voice of the Divine sounds and feels like, read His words, study the scriptures, and ponder them. Make them an integral part of everyday life. If you want your children to recognize, understand, and act on the promptings of the Spirit, you must study the scriptures with them.
>
> Don't yield to Satan's lie that you don't have time to study the scriptures. Choose to take time to study them. Feasting on the word of God each day is more important than sleep, school, work, television shows, video games, or social media. You may need to reorganize your priorities to provide time for the study of the word of God. If so, do it!
>
> ("Make the Exercise of Faith Your First Priority," Gen. Conf., Oct. 2014)

**Elder Robert D. Hales**

> For when we want to speak to God, we pray. And when we want Him to speak to us, we search the scriptures; for His words are spoken through His prophets. He will then teach us as we listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.
>
> If you have not heard His voice speaking to you lately, return with new eyes and new ears to the scriptures. They are our spiritual lifeline.
>
> ("Holy Scriptures: The Power of God unto Our Salvation," General Conference, October 2006)

**2 Nephi 32**

> **2** Do ye not remember that I said unto you that after ye had received the Holy Ghost ye could speak with the tongue of angels? And now, how could ye speak with the tongue of angels save it were by the Holy Ghost?
>
> **3** Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, I said unto you, feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do.

The voice of the Savior is found in the scriptures. Those who are not familiar with the voice of the Savior are those ***not*** familiar with the scriptures. Those who "lean … unto [their] own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5) and opinions are those who base their teaching, understanding, or opinions off of themselves and not off of the word of God, the scriptures. The Lord then stated, crystal clear, "And by this you may know the righteous from the wicked" (D&C 84:53). This singular fact is enough, according to the Lord, to "***know*** the righteous from the wicked"; it is the difference between those that have "taken the Holy Spirit for their guide" (D&C 45:57) and those who have leaned unto their own understanding. Is our understanding, faith, teachings, etc. grounded in the scriptures (revealing keys, i.e., Joseph Smith) or in ourselves, our opinions, etc.? God's elect will turn to the scriptures, for they hear the voice of the Savior in them. Period.

The Lord continues, telling the Saints that their minds have become darkened ***because*** they have not read the scriptures as they should have. So, the lack of reading the scriptures, hearing the voice of the Savior, etc. not only is a sign of "the wicked," but it is also a sign of those with "darkened" minds. The Lord then laser focuses our attention in and points directly to The Book of Mormon and says, "this book specifically," the neglect of reading it and truly understanding it, ***is the reason*** the Saints will be scourged, will have their minds darkened, the Holy Ghost grieved, etc. We should be focused on The Book of Mormon (and Isaiah which is ***in*** The Book of Mormon), hear the voice, and build Zion. The Lord then calls the elect, those who hear the voice, those who read the scriptures, to go forth boldly and with power and prove themselves to be the elect with the scriptures and their preaching. If they stay grounded in "the voice," they will be able to endure all, which is a dead tie-in, once again, to the wise not being deceived for they had with them The Holy Ghost.

## The Holy Ghost: Our Right To

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

> We have the right to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, but we cannot have that guidance, if we wilfully refuse to consider the revelations that have been given to help us to understand and to guide us in the light and truth of the everlasting gospel. We cannot hope to have that guidance when we refuse to consider these great revelations which mean so much to us both temporally and spiritually. Now if we find ourselves in this condition of unbelief or unwillingness to seek for the light and the knowledge which the Lord has placed within our reach, then we are liable or in danger of being deceived by evil spirits, the doctrines of devils, and the teachings of men. And when these false influences are presented before us, we will not have the distinguishing understanding by which we can segregate them and know that they are not of the Lord. And so we may become prey unto the ungodly, to the vicious, to the cunning, to the craftiness of men.
>
> (*Doctrines of Salvation,* p. 43)

## The Second Comforter

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> The other Comforter spoken of is a subject of great interest, and perhaps understood by few of this generation. After a person has faith in Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized for the remission of his sins and receives the Holy Ghost, (by the laying on of hands), which is the first Comforter, then let him continue to humble himself before God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and living by every word of God, and the Lord will soon say unto him, Son, thou shalt be exalted.
>
> When the Lord has thoroughly proved him, and finds that the man is determined to serve Him at all hazards, then the man will find his calling and his election made sure, then it will be his privilege to receive the other Comforter, which the Lord hath promised the Saints, as is recorded in the testimony of St. John, in the 14th chapter, from the 12th to the 27th verses.
>
> Note the 16, 17, 18, 21, 23 verses:
>
> "16. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever;
>
> "17. Even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.
>
> "18. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.* *
>
> "21. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.
>
> "23. If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."
>
> Now what is this other Comforter? It is no more nor less than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; and this is the sum and substance of the whole matter; that when any man obtains this last Comforter, he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him, or appear unto him from time to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him, and they

> will take up their abode with him, and the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him, and the Lord will teach him face to face, and he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; and this is the state and place the ancient Saints arrived at when they had such glorious visions—Isaiah, Ezekiel, John upon the Isle of Patmos, St. Paul in the three heavens, and all the Saints who held communion with the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn.
>
> ("The Second Comforter," *TPJS,* pp. 150–151)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> We consider that God has created man with a mind capable of instruction, and a faculty which may be enlarged in proportion to the heed and diligence given to the light communicated from heaven to the intellect; and that the nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, till he has overcome the evils of his life and lost every desire for sin; and like the ancients, arrives at that point of faith where he is wrapped in the power and glory of his Maker and is caught up to dwell with Him.
>
> ("As Man Approaches God He Is Enlightened," *TPJS,* p. 51)

As one heeds the Holy Ghost and allows it to purge the old blood out from him, etc., that individual will have the Holy Spirit of Promise seal their ordinances to them, making their calling and election sure. Those individuals, if they continue to press forward and prove themselves, once they have been "thoroughly proved" by the Lord, when the time arrives, it will then be those individuals' privilege to be brought back into the presence of the Son—that is the blessing of the Second Comforter.

Having one's calling and election made sure is not synonymous with being translated, and it is not synonymous with being a member of the 144,000. This is gone over in subsequent chapters.

## Commitment to the Saints

We, brothers and sisters, have done a fairly good job as Saints at cultivating the Light of Christ in our lives and attempting to foster charitable acts of goodwill, peace, brotherly kindness, etc. with our other brothers and sisters on this globe. But may I be so bold as to suggest that we have neglected the greater intelligence. We have found ourselves comfortably in the terrestrial kingdom and have decided that we don't have to be valiant in our testimony of the Savior and yet will be saved in the kingdom of God (D&C 76:79). We have convinced ourselves, despite the clear warning in the scriptures, that all is well in Zion and that if we are guilty, God will merely beat us with a few stripes and we will be saved in the kingdom of God (2 Nephi 28:8). We have convinced ourselves that evil is good and good is evil (Isaiah 5:20). We have convinced ourselves that truth, which will exalt individuals, if spoken in a subjectively inappropriate manner, in a subjectively unpleasing tone, or in a subjectively louder voice, is somehow contentious and not of God despite the fact that the bearer is without fault, without guile, and is speaking the truth (*TPJS,* p. 26). We have convinced ourselves that an individual spewing lies—where the believing of his doctrine is actually damning, let alone grounds for excommunication—in a subjectively approved manner, in a subjectively approved pleasing tone, in a subjectively approved decimal of volume, is of God despite the fact that these individuals are full of guile, spewing apostasy, and circumventing the keys of God by claiming to have received revelations of Jesus Christ and God the Father and to have been ordained to do certain tasks. Brothers and Sisters, we need to wake up and learn how to "hear Him" and take the Holy Ghost for our guide. Otherwise, we will be deceived and fall by the wayside. Celestial Law is coming. Joseph Smith did not know how many people would be able to abide it, for many are called and few are chosen. There is yet daylight—we can perform our labors while it is yet day. There is still time to learn how to "hear Him."

Brothers and Sisters, I know that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true and that it still holds all the keys necessary for salvation. I know that we as members have been given the gift of the Holy Ghost, but many of us have refused to receive it, refused to let it purify us. There is a point in time coming in the near future, a period of great tribulation, that will purify and get us ready to see Jesus. If you take no preparations today, you will fall tomorrow, by the wayside, during the tribulation. You don't have to perfect yourself today, but you have to, at least, build yourself a foundation, and "hear[ing] Him" is integral to that foundation. In the words of our prophet, **President Nelson,** "Please do it now. Time is running out" ("Come, Follow Me," April 2019).

**Doctrine and Covenants 98**

> **8** I, the Lord God, make you free, therefore ye are free indeed; and the law also maketh you free.
>
> **9** Nevertheless, when the wicked rule the people mourn.
>
> **10** Wherefore, honest men and wise men should be sought for diligently, and good men and wise men ye should observe to uphold; otherwise whatsoever is less than these cometh of evil.
>
> **11** And I give unto you a commandment, that ye shall forsake all evil and cleave unto all good, that ye shall live by every word which proceedeth forth out of the mouth of God.
>
> **12** For he will give unto the faithful line upon line, precept upon precept; and I will try you and prove you herewith.
>
> **13** And whoso layeth down his life in my cause, for my name's sake, shall find it again, even life eternal.
>
> **14** Therefore, be not afraid of your enemies, for I have decreed in my heart, saith the Lord, that I will prove you in all things, whether you will abide in my covenant, even unto death, that you may be found worthy.
>
> **15** For if ye will not abide in my covenant ye are not worthy of me.

**Doctrine and Covenants 64**

> **34** Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days.
>
> **35** And the rebellious shall be cut off out of the land of Zion, and shall be sent away, and shall not inherit the land.
>
> **36** For, verily I say that the rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim, wherefore they shall be plucked out.
>
> **37** Behold, I, the Lord, have made my church in these last days like unto a judge sitting on a hill, or in a high place, to judge the nations.
>
> **38** For it shall come to pass that the inhabitants of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion.
>
> **39** And liars and hypocrites shall be proved by them, and they who are not apostles and prophets shall be known.
>
> **40** And even the bishop, who is a judge, and his counselors, if they are not faithful in their stewardships shall be condemned, and others shall be planted in their stead.

**2 Nephi 31**

> **13** Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I know that if ye shall follow the Son, with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God, but with real intent, repenting of your sins, witnessing unto the Father that ye are willing to take upon you the name of Christ, by baptism—yea, by following your Lord and your Savior down into the water, according to his word, behold, then shall ye receive the Holy Ghost; yea, then cometh the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost; and then can ye speak with the tongue of angels, and shout praises unto the Holy One of Israel.

# The Pyramid of Truth

*"Contrary to the doubts of some, there really is such a thing as right and wrong. There really is absolute truth—eternal truth. One of the plagues of our day is that too few people know where to turn for truth." – President Nelson (October 2021)*

## The Name

Before I begin with this topic of ever-increasing importance, I have to address the name "The Pyramid of Truth," as this seems to be one of the many points of attack in ignorance that can easily be cleared up. Does the phrase "pyramid of truth" ever appear in the scriptures? No. Does the phrase "the pride cycle" ever appear in scriptures? No. Does the phrase "the point of no return" ever appear in the scriptures? No. Does the phrase "the church is scaffolding" or "scaffolding of the church" ever appear in the scriptures? No. Etc., etc., etc.

So what am I getting at here? Does it really matter what you call "the pride cycle"? No! Call it whatever you like. We just call it that and teach it that way because it an easy way to conceptualize the subject matter, which is clearly seen in all standard works and in the words of ancient and modern prophets. If you go looking for the phrase "the point of no return," you won't find it anywhere but by President Kimball, but the doctrine he is teaching surrounding it is found everywhere; it was just phraseology to help us contextualize what was being taught. That being said, I will and do refer to this subject as "the pyramid of truth," but you can call it whatever you like! Call it "the keys of the kingdom" or "rights of revelation" or "doctrine vs. policy" or "determining truth" or "building on the rock." It is all of those things and more in one package. What I will do in the course of this paper is lay out a proper understanding of this subject, so that by the end, you will understand why I choose to call it "the pyramid of truth." But you can call it whatever you like so long as you understand that it is the truth of the matter. Period.

## Doctrine vs. Policy

The first thing we need to tackle is an understanding of the difference between what we call "doctrine" and what we call "policy."

**Elder David A. Bednar**

> A gospel doctrine is a truth of salvation revealed by a loving Heavenly Father. Gospel doctrines are eternal, do not change, and pertain to the eternal progression and exaltation of Heavenly Father's sons and daughters... A gospel doctrine answers the question "why?"
>
> (*Act in Doctrine: Spiritual Patterns for Turning from Self to the Savior* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2012))

**Elder Gerrit W. Gong**

> As we reflect on trust, we know God is a God of truth and 'canst not lie.' We know truth is a knowledge of things as they are, were, and are to come. We know continuing revelation and inspiration fit unchanging truth to changing circumstances.
>
> ("Trust Again," General Conference, October 2021)

**Elder Boyd K. Packer**

> Procedures, programs, the administrative policies, even some patterns of organization are subject to change. We are quite free, indeed, quite obliged to alter them from time to time. But the *principles,* the *doctrines, never* change.
>
> ( "Principles," *Ensign,* March 1985)

**Elder Boyd K. Packer**

> Changes in organization or procedures are a testimony that revelation is ongoing. While doctrines remain fixed, the methods or procedures do not. ... The doctrines will remain fixed, eternal; the organization, programs, and procedures will be altered as directed by Him whose church this is.
>
> ("Revelation in a Changing World," General Conference, October 1989)

**John 7**

> **16** Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.
>
> **17** If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.
>
> **18** He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

**President Nelson**

> Contrary to the doubts of some, there really is such a thing as right and wrong. There really is absolute truth—eternal truth. One of the plagues of our day is that too few people know where to turn for truth.
>
> ("Opening Remarks," General Conference, October 2021)

**George Q. Cannon**

> Too great a value cannot be placed upon the possession of truth. It is indeed beyond estimate. ... The great strength of the latter-day work in which we are engaged is found in its truth. This constitutes its great power and makes it all powerful. ... Truth cannot be changed. It cannot be altered. It is eternal. All other things may perish; the heavens and the earth may pass away; but the truth cannot be destroyed.
>
> (*Juvenile Instructor,* Volume 30, pp. 273–274, May 1, 1895)

**D&C 93:24**

> **24** And truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> Sometimes we as leaders of the Church are criticized for holding firm to the laws of God, defending the Savior's doctrine, and resisting the social pressures of our day. But our commission as ordained apostles is "to go into all the world to preach [His] gospel unto every creature. That means we are commanded to teach truth. ...
>
> Our commission as apostles is to teach nothing but truth. That commission does not give us the authority to modify divine law. ...
>
> Though we of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles cannot change the laws of God, we *do* have the charge "to build up the church, and regulate all the affairs of the same in all nations." Thus we *can* adjust policy when the Lord directs us to do so.
>
> ("The Love and Laws of God," BYU Speeches, September 17, 2019)

There are countless quotes and scriptures that I could glean from to prove these points, but for the sake of the length of paper and time invested, I've chosen the quotes (and will continue to pick quotes) that I have until I feel as though it is enough to prove something convincingly. So simply, what is doctrine? Doctrine is the "thou shalt knows" of the gospel, or the "whys," as Elder Bednar said above. What we call "doctrine" is universal truths that will never change. "Though the heav-

ens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away" (D&C 1:38, 56:11; Matt. 24:35). "Policy" or "policies" of the church are the application of doctrine in the church; they are the "thou shalt dos," and they will change based on situation, circumstance, peoples, etc.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it; and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God. But we cannot keep all the commandments without first knowing them, and we cannot expect to know all, or more than we now know unless we comply with or keep those we have already received. ***That which is wrong under one circumstance, may be, and often is, right under another.***
>
> God said, "Thou shalt not kill;" at another time He said, "Thou shalt utterly destroy." This is the principle on which the government of heaven is conducted—by revelation adapted to the circumstances in which the children of the kingdom are placed. Whatever God requires is right, no matter what it is, although we may not see the reason thereof till long after the events transpire. If we seek first the kingdom of God, all good things will be added. So with Solomon: first he asked wisdom, and God gave it him, and with it every desire of his heart, even things which might be considered abominable to all who understand the order of heaven only in part, but which in reality were right because God gave and sanctioned by special revelation.
>
> A parent may whip a child, and justly, too, because he stole an apple; whereas if the child had asked for the apple, and the parent had given it, the child would have eaten it with a better appetite; there would have been no stripes; all the pleasure of the apple would have been secured, all the misery of stealing lost.
>
> ("Happiness the Design of Existence," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 255–256)

The "thou shalt dos" from the Lord can and will change—that is policy. The "thou shalt knows" will never change—those are doctrine.

## Is Policy Less Important Than Doctrine?

Most of the time today, when people are teaching the difference between doctrine and policy, it is done in an attempt to create a hierarchy of importance with which they can then self-justify their throwing away of church policy. For example, "doing [insert any church policy here, including urgings, pleadings, etc. from the keys] isn't doctrine, and therefore I don't have to obey it; it isn't necessary for my salvation." Simply put, this is utterly false. One is required to learn doctrine and then implement what they learned into their daily lives, but equally so, they are required to live according to "every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God" (D&C 84:44).

**D&C 1**

> **14** And the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, shall be cut off from among the people;

**D&C 132**

> **24** This is eternal lives—to know the only wise and true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. I am he. Receive ye, therefore, my law.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> This being the fact, God has given certain laws to the human family, which, if observed, are sufficient to prepare them to inherit this rest. [We are "learning heaven" by obeying gospel laws and principles]
>
> (*Joseph Smith Papers,* 1834, https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/letter-to-the-church-circa-februa ry-1834/2#12916430628429006334)

**Doctrine and Covenants 84**

> **43** And I now give unto you a commandment to beware concerning yourselves, to give diligent heed to the words of eternal life.
>
> **44** For you shall live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God.
>
> **45** For the word of the Lord is truth, and whatsoever is truth is light, and whatsoever is light is Spirit, even the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

**Doctrine and Covenants 98**

> **10** Wherefore, honest men and wise men should be sought for diligently, and good men and wise men ye should observe to uphold; otherwise whatsoever is less than these cometh of evil.
>
> **11** And I give unto you a commandment, that ye shall forsake all evil and cleave unto all good, that ye shall live by every word which proceedeth forth out of the mouth of God.
>
> **12** For he will give unto the faithful line upon line, precept upon precept; and I will try you and prove you herewith.

**Doctrine and Covenants 21**

> **4** Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me;
>
> **5** For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith.
>
> **6** For by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name's glory.

**Elder Marion G. Romney**

> I desire to call your attention to the principle of loyalty, loyalty to the truth and loyalty to the men whom God has chosen to lead the cause of truth. I speak of "the truth" and these "men" jointly, because it is impossible fully to accept the one and partly reject the other.
>
> I raise my voice on this matter to warn and counsel you to be on your guard against criticism. I have heard some myself and have been told about more. It comes, in part, from those who hold, or have held, prominent positions. Ostensibly, they are in good standing in the Church. In expressing their feelings, they frequently say, "We are members of the Church, too, you know, and our feelings should be considered."
>
> ***They assume that one can be in full harmony with the spirit of the gospel, enjoy full fellowship in the Church, and at the same time be out of harmony with the leaders of the Church and the counsel and directions they give. Such a position is wholly inconsistent, because the guidance of this Church comes, not alone from the written word, but also from continuous revelation, and the Lord gives that revelation to the Church through His chosen leaders and none else. It follows, therefore, that those who profess to accept the gospel and who at the same time criticize and refuse to follow the counsel of the leaders, are assuming an indefensible position.***
>
> Such a spirit leads to apostasy.
>
> (*Conference Report,* April 1942, pp. 17–18)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do (see Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7). Our safest insurance is to continue to be worthy of admission to His holy house. The greatest gift you could give to the Lord is to keep yourself unspotted from the world, worthy to attend His holy house. His gift to you will be the peace and security of knowing that you are worthy to meet Him, whenever that time comes.
>
> ("The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior's Second Coming," *Ensign,* April 2020)

**Joseph F. Smith**

> The moment a man says he will not submit to legally constituted authority of the Church, whether it be the Teachers, the Bishopric, the High Council, his Quorum or the First Presidency, and in his heart confirms it and carries it out, that moment he cuts himself off from the privileges and blessings of the Priesthood and Church, and severs himself from the people of God, for he ignores the authority that He has instituted in His Church. These are the men that generally get crochets in their heads, that get inspiration (from beneath) and that are often so desirous to guide the Church, and to sit in judgment upon the Priesthood. The only safe way for us to do, as individuals, is to live so humbly, so righteously and so faithfully before God, that we may possess His Spirit to that extent that we will be able to judge righteously, and discern between truth and error, between right and wrong; and then we will know when a decision is rendered against us that in 99 cases out of a hundred we are in error, and that the decision is right; and although we may at the time not be fully able to see and feel its justness, yet will be constrained to say that inasmuch as there are sixteen chances against one for me to be wrong, "I will gracefully and humbly submit." The pith of the matter is, the Lord has established His Church, organized His Priesthood, and conferred authority upon certain individuals, councils and quorums, and it is the duty of the people of God to live so that they shall know that these are acceptable unto Him. If we begin to cut off this one and that one, and set their authority aside, we may just as well at once set God himself aside, and say he has no right to dictate.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 24, Discourse 23, p. 187, 1883)

The temple recommend questions are an example of Church policy that has changed over time, but no righteous individual would argue that holding a temple recommend has no impact on their spiritual destiny. Following Church policy, i.e., obedience, is actually more important than simply understanding doctrine.

**President Ezra Taft Benson**

> Second: *The living prophet is more vital to us than the Standard Works.*
>
> President Wilford Woodruff tells of an interesting incident that occurred in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith:
>
> "I will refer to a certain meeting I attended in the town of Kirtland in my early days. At that meeting some remarks were made that have been made here today, with regard to the living prophets and with regard to the written word of God. The same principle was presented, although not as extensively as it has been here, when a leading man in the Church got up and talked upon the subject, and said: 'You have got the word of God before you here in the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants; you have the written word of God, and you who give revelations should give revelations according to those books, as what is written in those books is the word of God. We should confine ourselves to them.'
>
> "When he concluded, Brother Joseph turned to Brother Brigham Young and said, 'Brother Brigham I want you to go to the podium and tell us your views with regard to the living oracles and the written word of God.' Brother Brigham took the stand, and he took the Bible, and laid it down; he took the Book of Mormon, and laid it down; and he took the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and laid it down before him, and he said: 'There is the written word of God to us, concerning the work of God from the beginning of the world, almost, to our day. And now,' said he, 'when compared with the living oracles those books are nothing to me; those books do not convey the word of God direct to us now, as do the words of a Prophet or a man bearing the Holy Priesthood in our day and generation. I would rather have the living oracles than all the writing in the books.' That was the course he pursued. When he was through, Brother Joseph said to the congregation; 'Brother Brigham has told you the word of the Lord, and he has told you the truth.'" (*Conference Report,* October 1897, pp. 18–19.)
>
> Third: *The living prophet is more important to us than a dead prophet.*
>
> God's revelation to Adam did not instruct Noah how to build the Ark. Noah needed his own revelation. Therefore, the most important prophet so far as you and I are concerned is the one living in our day and age to whom the Lord is currently revealing His will for us. Therefore the most important reading we can do is any of the words of the prophet contained each month in our Church Magazines. Our instructions about what we should do for each six months are found in the General Conference addresses which are printed in the Church magazine.
>
> Beware of those who would set up the dead prophets against the living prophets, for the living prophets always take precedence.
>
> ("Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophet," June 1981)

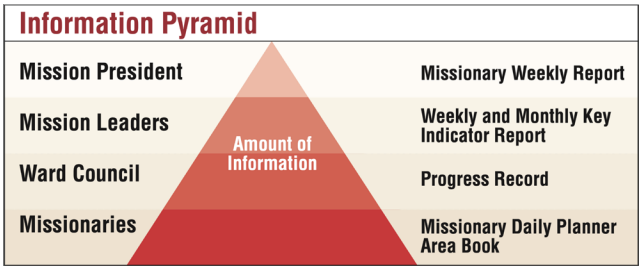
To keep things clear, it's important to note that Brigham Young and Ezra Taft Benson are talking about "thou shalt dos," i.e., policy. Since doctrine doesn't change, a new prophet can't change doctrine, only policy. Every time that you read "make known the will of God," the "will" of God in that sentence is key—it is letting you know that this is policy, this is a command, this is a "thou shalt do."

**Elder John A. Widtsoe**

> The most important prophet in any age is the living prophet. … To follow the living prophet, the interpreter of the past, is the essence of wisdom. The very strength of the Church lies in the doctrine of continuous revelation through a living prophet.
>
> (*Evidences and Reconciliations,* 3 vols. in 1, arr. G. Homer Durham, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1960, p. 352)

## Rights of Revelation

Now that we understand the difference between doctrine and policy, and we understand that policy is the "thou shalt dos" or the rights of presidency, the next thing that we have to understand is who can receive that revelation and for whom.




("Chapter 8: How to Use Time Wisely," *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service,* 2004, p. 140)

This visual found in *Preach My Gospel* is actually where the first intimations of the name "pyramid of truth" came from. At each level, the amount of revelation is different, and the importance of the revelation is different. If you worthily and diligently seek after it, you will receive substantially more revelation individually for your own life than any-

thing else; ergo personal revelation is where you will receive the bulk of your personal "thou shalt dos" in life. But can personal revelation supersede revelation that is from those with keys of authority greater than your own, or in other words, higher on the pyramid? The answer is no, and *Preach My Gospel* in fact answers that:

**Preach My Gospel**

> A Word of Caution
>
> As you pray for inspiration, you should also confirm your feelings. For example, compare your decisions with the scriptures and the teachings of the living prophets. Be certain that the feelings are consistent with the assignment you have; for example, you will not receive revelation to tell a local bishop how he should perform in his calling. Discuss your decisions and conclusions with your companion, your district leader, or your mission president when appropriate.
>
> ("Chapter 4: How Do I Recognize and Understand the Spirit?" *Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service,* 2004, p. 98)

The "thou shalt dos" that come from priesthood keys above you are substantially fewer in quantity versus personal revelation, as you can see in the visual above, but your personal revelation can never be out of sync—it can't run contrary—to the pyramid which sits on top of it.

**President Henry B. Eyring**

> It is hard to keep the Lord's commandments without faith and trust in Him. As some lose their faith in the Savior, they may even attack His counsel, calling good evil and evil good. To avoid this tragic error, it is crucial that any personal revelation we receive be consonant with the teachings of the Lord and His prophets.
>
> ("The Faith to Ask and Then to Act," General Conference, Oct. 2021)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Order by Which Revelation Comes
>
> I will inform you that it is contrary to the economy of God for any member of the Church, or any one, to receive instruction for those in authority, higher than themselves; therefore you will see the impropriety of giving heed to them.
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 21–22)

**Enrichment J: Keys for Avoiding Deception**

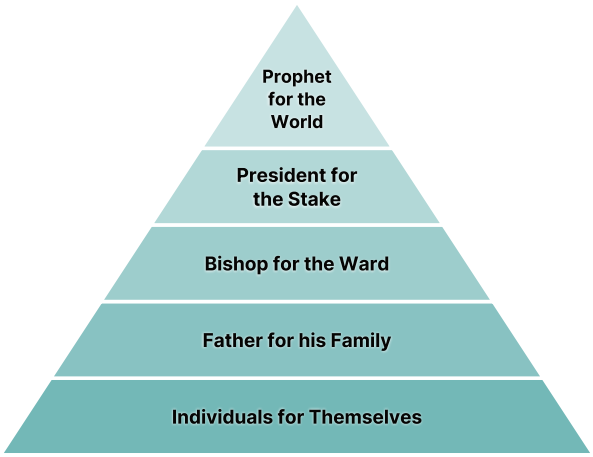
> The First Presidency (Joseph F. Smith, Anthon H. Lund, and Charles W. Penrose) wrote in 1913...
>
> "When visions, dreams, tongues, prophecy, impressions or any extraordinary gift or inspiration conveys something out of harmony with the accepted revelations of the Church or contrary to the decisions of its constituted authorities, Latter-day Saints may know that it is not of God, no matter how plausible it may appear. Also they should understand that directions for the guidance of the Church will come, by revelation, through the head. All faithful members are entitled to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit for themselves, their families, and for those over whom they are appointed and ordained to preside. But anything at discord with that which comes from God through the head of the Church is not to be received as authoritative or reliable. In secular as well as spiritual affairs, Saints may receive Divine guidance and revelation affecting themselves, but this does not convey authority to direct others, and is not to be accepted when contrary to Church covenants, doctrine or discipline, or to known facts, proven truths, or good common sense. No person has the right to induce his fellow members of the Church to engage in speculations or take stock in ventures of any kind on the specious claim of Divine revelation or vision or dream, especially when it is in opposition to the voice of recognized authority, local or general. The Lord's Church 'is a house of order.' It is not governed by individual gifts or manifestations, but by the order and power of the Holy Priesthood as sustained by the voice and vote of the Church in its appointed conferences. ...
>
> "Be not led by any spirit or influence that discredits established authority, contradicts true scientific principles and discoveries, or leads away from the direct revelations of God for the government of the Church. The Holy Ghost does not contradict its own revealings. Truth is always harmonious with itself. Piety is often the cloak of error. The counsels of the Lord through the channel he has appointed will be followed with safety. Therefore, O! ye Latterday Saints, profit by these words of warning." (In Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency,* 4:285–86.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition), 2001, p. 416)

**Prophets and Revelations**

> While God gives revelation through prophets to guide all of His children, individuals can receive revelation to help them with their specific needs, responsibilities, and questions and to help strengthen their testimonies. However, personal inspiration from the Lord will never contradict the revelation God gives through His prophets.
>
> ("Seminary Doctrinal Mastery Core Document," Prophets and Revelations, Section 5.5)

## The Pyramid of Policy

So we've gone over the difference between policy and doctrine, and we've gone over rights of revelation. Now let's build the pyramid of policy, i.e., the pyramid of keys of presidency, i.e., the pyramid of keys, etc. Is the pyramid for policy the same as it is for doctrine? Absolutely not, and the reasons for that we have already gone over. Policies can change, commands can change, "thou shalt dos" can change; therefore, the present-day keys take precedence. Doctrine, on the other hand, cannot change. A present-day prophet cannot change doctrine that has already been established. We will get into that when we get into the pyramid of doctrine.




Revelation in the Church

**S. Dilworth Young**

> We have learned that in order to obey the Lord we must obey his servants. Each presiding officer is to be obeyed in righteousness, in the field of his presidency. And so it is clear that we obey the President of the Church, the president of the stake, the bishop of the ward, and president of the quorum each in his field of service. And finally, forgotten by many as a requirement of heaven, is the necessity of obedience to our parents.
>
> ("Obedience—the First Law of Heaven," *Conference Report,* October 1966, p. 27)

**President Boyd K. Packer**

> Revelation continues in the Church: the prophet receiving it for the Church; the president for his stake, his mission, or his quorum; the bishop for his ward; the father for his family; the individual for himself.
>
> ("We Believe All That God Has Revealed," *Ensign,* May 1974, p. 95)

**Marion G. Romney**

> "This statement is worth emphasizing. 'He that receiveth my servants receiveth me' [D&C 84:36]. Who are his servants? They are his representatives in the offices of the Priesthood—the General, Stake, Priesthood Quorum, and Ward officers. It behooves us to keep this in mind when we are tempted to disregard our presiding authorities, bishops, quorum and stake presidents, etc., when, within the jurisdiction of their callings, they give us counsel and advice"
>
> (Conference Report, Oct. 1960, 73)

Once again, quantity is not the same thing as importance. Everything lower needs to be consonant with that which is above. The Lord's kingdom is a theocracy with the Lord being King of kings. If you do not understand how to insert yourself and your family into said theocracy, you will not be a part of the Lord's celestial kingdom. The most important thing that people get wrong when creating the pyramid of policy and the pyramid of doctrine is what I just went over—anything higher on the pyramid *always* trumps everything below. The easiest way to explain this to a layman in a way that everyone should understand is with the card game war. For those who are not familiar with this game, I will give a brief explanation of it.

In the game of war, each person has a deck of cards. They flip over the top card, and the largest card wins. If more than one person is playing, the same rules apply; everyone flips their card and the highest card wins. Do the lower cards matter? No. Can people add up the value of their cards to beat out a higher card? The answer is no. It doesn't matter if there are 10 million people playing who all draw the 2 card; if somebody draws the king card, it wins. It doesn't matter how many lower cards are produced—that is the game of war.

How does this relate to the pyramid of policy? If a bishop comes out and says "do 10 jumping jacks," a father comes out and says "family, we need to do 8 jumping jacks," who wins? Who is in the right? Bishop is greater than father, just like Queen is greater than 9. What if the Prophet of God comes out and says "do 10 jumping jacks," and 1 million members come out and say that they have received personal revelation that they only need to do 2 jumping jacks? Who wins? The Prophet of God. It doesn't matter how many individuals claim to have received revelation that is contrary. An example of this that people should be able to immediately understand is this: Christ comes out and says "I am the Christ," and hundreds of Jewish rabbis and millions of Jews say that he isn't. Who wins? Christ obviously wins. It doesn't matter how many people said something different; if it is lower in the chain and it is not consonant with that which is above it, you can throw it out. Just like in the card game war, it doesn't matter if that individual is your father, stake president or an apostle; if it is not consonant with that which has already been revealed and set forth from the top, it is not your job to try to find a way to make it fit. You put the trump card on the pile on all those other garbage cards, and then you push the pile off to the side. There is no forming concerts of clarity with any policy or any doctrine that has been found to be not consonant. Period.

## Keys of the Kingdom

It is important to note before going directly into the pyramid of doctrine that the pyramid of policy is nothing more than a correct understanding of the keys of the kingdom. Understanding the keys of the kingdom, one will have a correct understanding of doctrine vs. policy and be able to build these pyramids themselves.

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** explained the keys of the kingdom thus:

> ### Keys
>
> Two different usages of the term *keys* are found in the revelations. One has reference to the directive powers whereby the Church or kingdom and all its organizations are governed, the keys of the kingdom being the powers of presidency. The other usage refers to the means provided whereby something is revealed, discovered, or made manifest. Thus Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were given the keys to translate and bring hidden scriptures to light (D&C 6:24–28). And thus Joseph held "the keys of the mysteries, and the revelations which are sealed" (D&C 28:7, 35:18, 64:5), meaning that he had the power and means at his disposal to bring these things to light and reveal them to the world.
>
> Similarly the higher priesthood "holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God" (D&C 84:19–22), for it is only in and through and because of that priesthood that the mysteries of the kingdom can be learned and the knowledge of God obtained. The keys of the ministering of angels are resident in the Aaronic Priesthood (D&C 13, 107:20), and the Melchizedek Priesthood holds "the keys of all the spiritual blessings of the church—To have the privilege of receiving the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, to have the heavens opened unto them, to commune with the general assembly and church of the Firstborn, and to enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant" (D&C 107:18–19).
>
> President Joseph F. Smith said: *"What is a key? It is the right or privilege which belongs to and comes with the priesthood to have communication with God.* Is not that a key? Most decidedly. We may not enjoy the blessings, or key, very much, but the key is in the priesthood. *It is the right to enjoy the blessings of communication with the heavens, and the privilege and authority to administer in the ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ, to preach the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins.* That is a key. You who hold the priesthood have the key or the authority, the right, the power or privilege to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the gospel of repentance and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins." (*Gospel Doctrine,* 5th ed., p.142)
>
> ### Keys of Salvation
>
> Those having power to open the door to salvation are said to hold the *keys of salvation,* that is, they are able to make salvation available to other men. These keys center in Christ, for salvation comes in and through his name only (Mosiah 3:16–18), and he directs how this great gift may be obtained and by whom.
>
> Adam, as the presiding high priest over the earth, holds "the keys of salvation under the counsel and direction of the Holy One" (D&C 78:16), and accordingly all the affairs of the kingdom of God on earth for all ages are administered under Adam's direction and supervision. Under him the heads of the various dispensations and the prophets called in those eras have had power to administer salvation to men. (D&C 7). The President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints holds the keys of salvation for all men now living because he is the only one by whose authorization the sealing power of the priesthood can be used to seal men up to salvation and exaltation in the kingdom of God (D&C 132:7).
>
> ### Keys of the Kingdom
>
> Keys are the right of presidency, the directing, controlling, governing power. The keys of the kingdom are the power, right, and authority to preside over the kingdom of God on earth (which is the Church) and to direct all of its affairs.
>
> President Joseph F. Smith taught: "Every man ordained to any degree of the priesthood has this authority delegated to him. *But it is necessary that every act performed under this authority shall be done at the proper time and place, in the proper way, and after the proper order. The power of directing these labors constitutes the keys of the priesthood.*

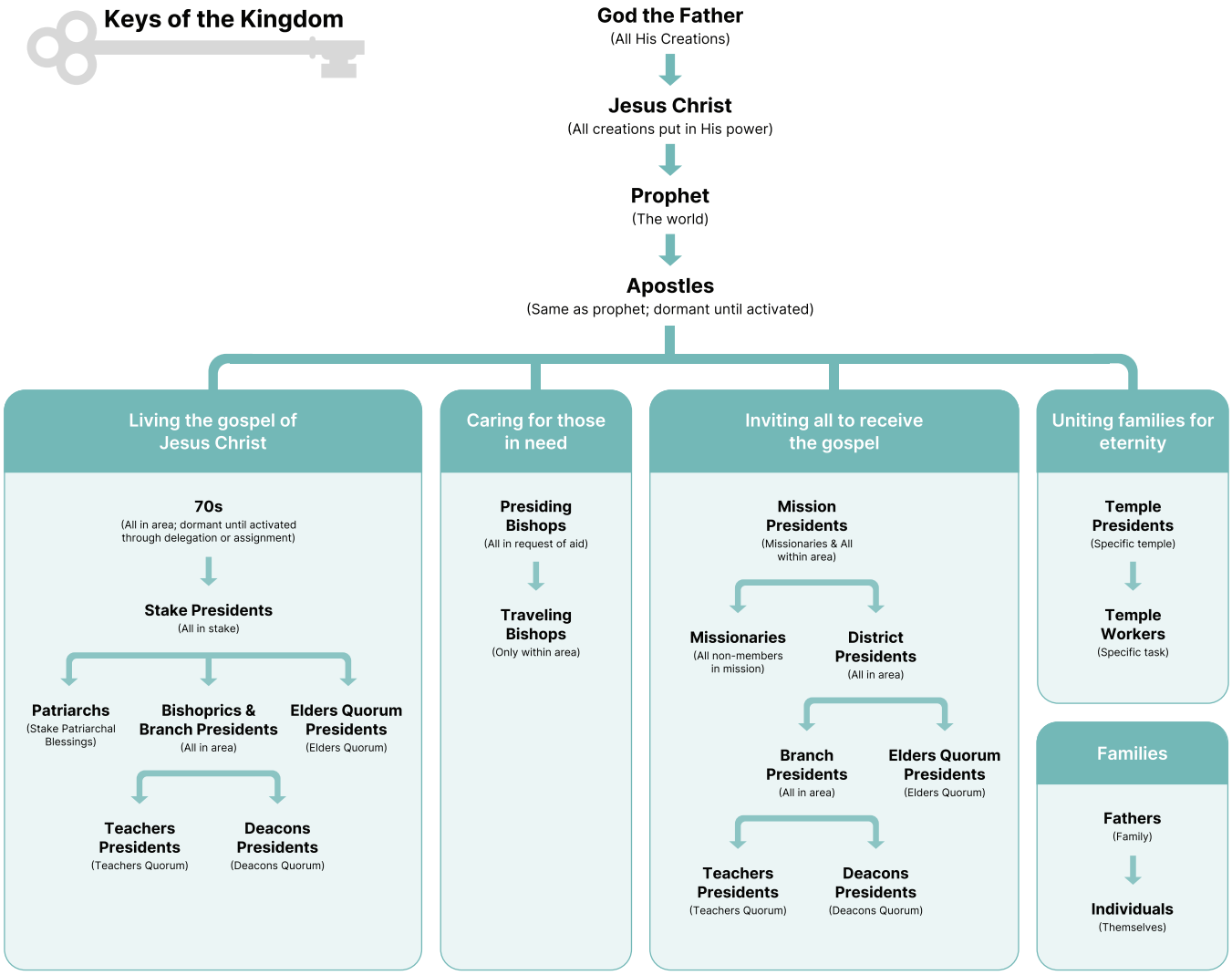
"In their fulness, the keys are held by only one person at a time, the Prophet and President of the Church. He may delegate any portion of this power to another, in which case that person holds the keys of that particular labor. Thus, the president of a temple, the president of a stake, the bishop of a ward, the president of a mission, the president of a quorum, each holds the keys of the labors performed in that particular body or locality. His priesthood is not increased by this special appointment, for a seventy who presides over a mission has no more priesthood than a seventy who labors under his direction; and the president of an elders quorum, for example, has no more priesthood than any member of that quorum. But he holds the power of directing the official labors performed in the mission or the quorum, or in other words, the keys of that division of that work. So it is throughout all the ramifications of the priesthood—a distinction must be carefully made between the general authority and the directing of the labor performed by that authority." (Gospel Doctrine, 5th ed., p. 136).

Through the ages various prophets have held various keys, by virtue of which they have been empowered to use their priesthood to perform specified labors. Adam holds the keys of presidency over all dispensations and is the presiding high priest (under Christ) over all the earth. (D&C 78:16, Teachings p.157–158, 169). Noah stands next to Adam in priesthood authority (Teachings p.157) and after these two come all the heads of the different gospel dispensations, together with a host of other mighty prophets. For example: Elijah held the keys of the sealing power in ancient Israel (D&C 27:9, 110:13–16, Malachi 4:5–6), as did Nephi the son of Helaman among the Nephites In the early years of the Christian Era (Helaman 10:4–10). One man named Elias held the keys of authority in the days of Abraham (D&C 110:12), while to another bearing the same name has been "committed the keys of bringing to pass the restoration of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began, concerning the last days." (D&C 27:6).

Moroni holds "the keys of the record of the stick of Ephraim" (D&C 27:5); John the Baptist the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood and the gospel of repentance (D&C 13, 84:26–28); Moses those whereby the priesthood may be used to gather Israel and lead the Ten Tribes from the lands of the north (D&C 110:11); Peter, James and John hold the keys of the kingdom and of the dispensation of the fulness of times (D&C 27:12–13, 128:20); and Raphael (whose mortal identity has not been revealed) holds the keys of his dispensation (D&C 128:21).

All of these and others—"divers angels, from Michael or Adam down to the present time"—have come in the last days, "all declaring their dispensations, their rights, their keys, their honors, their majesty and glory, and the power of their priesthood (D&C 128:21). Thus Joseph Smith and his successors have been and are possessors of all of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, even as these were held by Peter and the ancient apostles (Matt.16:19, 18:18), and accordingly those so endowed have power to govern all the affairs of the earthly kingdom and direct the administration of all the ordinances of salvation and exaltation for worthy recipients (D&C 35:25, 42:69, 65, 90:2–3, 97:14, 115:19).

"The keys of the kingdom,...belong always unto the Presidency of the High Priesthood" (D&C 81:2), and only one man on earth at a time, the President of the Church, can exercise them in their fulness (D&C 132:7). This necessarily must be so because keys are the right of pres-



idency and there cannot be two equal heads, otherwise the Lord's house would not be a house of order but of confusion (D&C 132:8–12). All of the keys of the kingdom, however, are conferred upon every man sustained as a member of the Council of the Twelve (D&C 112:14–34, 124:128). Thus when a member of the Council of the Twelve becomes the senior apostle of God on earth, he can exercise in their fulness the keys which theretofore have lain dormant in him (*Doctrines of Salvation,* vol. 3, pp.125–159).

The keys of the kingdom—the right and power to govern the Lord's affairs for and on his behalf—have been held by prophets in all ages, but when the Lord comes to reign personally upon the earth during the millennial era, he will take back the keys. Those who have held them will make an accounting to him of their stewardships at the place called Adam-ondi-Ahman, at which gathering Christ will receive "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him." (Daniel 7:13–14). Eventually in the celestial day, "the keys of the kingdom shall be delivered up again unto the Father" (*Inspired Version,* Luke 3:8).

### Keys of the Ministering of Angels

In the same sense that the Melchizedek Priesthood holds "the key of the knowledge of God" (D&C 84:19) and "of all the spiritual blessings of the church" in that holders of that priesthood may "have the heavens opened unto them" and "enjoy the communion and presence of God the Father, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant" (D&C 107:18–19), so the Aaronic Priesthood holds the *keys of the mistering of angels* (D&C 13, 84:26–27, 107:20). That is, the Aaronic Priesthood opens the door to the ministering of angels, or in other words, those holding the lesser priesthood are in a position to have angels minister unto them. Wilford Woodruff, for instance, said: "I had the administration of angels while holding the office of a priest" (*Discourses of Wilford Woodruff,* p. 298).

(*Mormon Doctrine,* pp. 409–413)

**General Handbook**

### 3.4.1.1 Those Who Hold Priesthood Keys

Jesus Christ holds all the keys of the priesthood. Under His direction, priesthood keys are given to men to use in specific callings for accomplishing God's work, as explained below.

The Lord has conferred on each of His Apostles all the keys that pertain to the kingdom of God on earth. The senior living Apostle, the President of the Church, is the only person on earth authorized to exercise all of those priesthood keys (see Doctrine and Covenants 81:1–2; 107:64–67, 91–92; 132:7).

Under the direction of the President of the Church, the following priesthood leaders are given keys so they can preside in their areas of responsibility:

- Stake and district presidents.
- Bishops and branch presidents.
- Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood quorum presidents.
- Temple presidents.
- Mission presidents and missionary training center presidents.
- Church historic site presidents.

These leaders receive priesthood keys when they are set apart to their callings.

Priesthood keys are not given to others, including counselors to local priesthood leaders or presidents of Church organizations. Rather, these leaders are given delegated authority when they are set apart and when they receive assignments under the direction of those who hold priesthood keys. Presidents of Church organizations preside under the direction of those who hold priesthood keys (see 4.2.4).

(*General Handbook,* 2023)

## Building The Pyramid of Doctrine

There are some things, when building this pyramid, we ***have*** to understand, or we will be in an utter state of confusion and will never be solidly built upon the Rock. Most of these things have already been discussed in this chapter; here they are again simply in bullet form for ease of access and ease of learning.

1. Doctrine does not change—ever. Meaning, once something has been established as doctrine, it can never be changed. It can be made *unrevealed* again, but no *new* doctrine will or can ever be put in its place. We do not believe in supersessionism or abrogation.
2. Men and women make mistakes. Just because something was said by an Apostle or Prophet does not mean that it is doctrine. There is a process that even the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has to go through in order for something to be accepted as official doctrine in the church.
3. Because of the above, the way we go about building the Pyramid of Doctrine is not even close to the same way we built the Pyramid of Policy. We start with the first revealers of truth and then work down from there.

## Jesus The Christ (In the Flesh)

Remember that explanation of this process I gave earlier, with the card game "war"? This is how we correctly build the Pyramid of Doctrine as well. We start at the top of the pyramid—the principle revealer of truth and Light, Jesus the Christ in the flesh. Now, this is not "words written by prophets quoting Jesus the Christ"; this is Christ himself in the flesh. Words on paper can always be edited, mistranslated, etc. If Jesus the Christ shows up in the flesh, and you can prove it is Him and not an angel of the devil, the words that He shall speak unto you would supersede everything else that you have at your disposal. If there is anything the Lord Himself says that contradicts what anyone else has said, you play the "war" game and throw out whatever they said. The Lord himself is ***the*** source of Truth and Light.

**2 Nephi 32**

**6** Behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and there will be no more doctrine given until after he shall manifest himself unto you ***in the flesh.*** And when he shall manifest himself unto you ***in the flesh,*** the things which he shall say unto you ***shall ye observe to do.***

**7** And now I, Nephi, cannot say more; the Spirit stoppeth mine utterance, and I am left to mourn because of the unbelief, and the wickedness, and the ignorance, and the stiffneckedness of men; for they will not search knowledge, nor understand great knowledge, when it is given unto them in plainness, even as plain as word can be.

**Helaman 5**

**11** And he hath power given unto him from the Father to redeem them from their sins because of repentance; therefore he hath sent his angels to declare the tidings of the conditions of repentance, which bringeth unto the power of the Redeemer, unto the salvation of their souls.

**12** And now, my sons, remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall.

**3 Nephi 14**

**24** Therefore, whoso heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock—

**25** And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.

**26** And every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand—

**27** And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it.

**3 Nephi 11**

**39** Verily, verily, I say unto you, that this is my doctrine, and whoso buildeth upon this buildeth upon my rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them.

**40** And whoso shall declare more or less than this, and establish it for my doctrine, the same cometh of evil, and is not built upon my rock; but he buildeth upon a sandy foundation, and the gates of hell stand open to receive such when the floods come and the winds beat upon them.

**41** Therefore, go forth unto this people, and declare the words which I have spoken, unto the ends of the earth.

**2 Nephi 28**

**20** For behold, at that day shall he rage in the hearts of the children of men, and stir them up to anger against that which is good.

**21** And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell.

**22** And behold, others he flattereth away, and telleth them there is no hell; and he saith unto them: I am no devil, for there is none—and thus he whispereth in their ears, until he grasps them with his awful chains, from whence there is no deliverance.

**23** Yea, they are grasped with death, and hell; and death, and hell, and the devil, and all that have been seized therewith must stand before the throne of God, and be judged according to their works, from whence they must go into the place prepared for them, even a lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment.

**24** Therefore, wo be unto him that is at ease in Zion!

**25** Wo be unto him that crieth: All is well!

**26** Yea, wo be unto him that hearkeneth unto the precepts of men, and denieth the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost!

**27** Yea, wo be unto him that saith: We have received, and we need no more!

**28** And in fine, wo unto all those who tremble, and are angry because of the truth of God! For behold, he that is built upon the rock receiveth it with gladness; and he that is built upon a sandy foundation trembleth lest he shall fall.

**29** Wo be unto him that shall say: We have received the word of God, and we need no more of the word of God, for we have enough!

**30** For behold, thus saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have.

**31** Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm, or shall hearken unto the precepts of men, save their precepts shall be given by the power of the Holy Ghost.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

The other Comforter spoken of is a subject of great interest, and perhaps understood by few of this generation. After a person has faith in Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized for the remission of his sins and receives the Holy Ghost, (by the laying on of hands), which is the first Comforter, then let him continue to humble himself before God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and living by every word of God, and the Lord will soon say unto him, Son, thou shalt be exalted. When the Lord has thoroughly proved him, and finds that the man is determined to serve Him at all hazards, then the man will find his calling and his election made sure, ***then*** it will be his privilege to receive the other Comforter, which the Lord hath promised the Saints, as is recorded in the testimony of St. John, in the 14th chapter, from the 12th to the 27th verses.

"16. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever;

"17. Even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

"18. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. * *

"21. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

"23. If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

Now what is this other Comforter? It is no more nor less than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; and this is the sum and substance of the whole matter; that when any man obtains this last Comforter, he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him, or appear unto him from time to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him, and they will take up their abode with him, and ***the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him, and the Lord will teach him face to face, and he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God;*** and this is the state and place the ancient Saints arrived at when they had such glorious visions—Isaiah, Ezekiel, John upon the Isle of Patmos, St. Paul in the three heavens, and all the Saints who held communion with the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn.

("The Second Comforter," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 150)

**(20–31) Deuteronomy 32:15, 18, 30–31. To What or Whom Does the Word Rock Refer?**

"Christ is the *Stone of Israel.* (Gen. 49:24.) 'I am the good shepherd, and the stone of Israel. He that buildeth upon this rock shall never fall.' (D. & C. 50:44.) Christ is thus the stone or foundation upon which all men must build. Of him the psalmist prophesied: 'The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.' (Ps. 118:22; Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10–11; Luke 20:17–18.) Peter used this truth to teach that the saints 'as lively stones' should build 'a spiritual house,' with Christ, the Stone of Israel, as the foundation. (1 Pet. 2:1–9.)" (McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, p. 768.)

That the Apostle Paul understood this concept is clear from a statement he made about the children of Israel during the period of their wanderings: "For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:4). In other words, they all ate the same spiritual meat and drank the same spiritual drink.

(*Old Testament Student Manual* (Third edition), 2003, pp. 231–232)

**Moses 7**

**53** And the Lord said: Blessed is he through whose seed Messiah shall come; for he saith—I am Messiah, the King of Zion, the Rock of Heaven, which is broad as eternity; whoso cometh in at the gate and climbeth up by me shall never fall; wherefore, blessed are they of whom I have spoken, for they shall come forth with songs of everlasting joy.

When building the "Pyramid of Doctrine," it should be obvious that Jesus the Christ in the flesh has to be at the top.

## Joseph Smith (Dispensation Head)

The next principle revealer for man in any age is the Prophet Head of that specific dispensation. We as missionaries teach this fact every time we teach lesson #1, "The Restoration." There are periods called "apostasies" followed by periods called "dispensations," headed by what is called a "dispensation head." Since the world had fallen into a state of apostasy, it was necessary for the Lord to restore the truth, restore the *doctrine,* and this is always done through this prophet head of the dispensation. It is then, obviously, very important for this dispensation head to get things right, for doctrine does not change, meaning whatever that prophet head sets forth cannot be altered later by different prophets in that same dispensation. New additional insights and doctrines can be revealed by subsequent prophets in that dispensation, but there can be no altering of doctrine. This is why the Lord himself walked and talked with Noah. This is why the Lord himself wrote the ten commandments in stone for Moses. This is why the Prophet Joseph Smith was visited by countless (beyond comprehension) angels and prophets in his training. It is the job of subsequent prophets in that dispensation to uphold and defend the prophet head of the dispensation and what was revealed through him.

In connection with that, the prophet head is the one who lays out the scriptures, or standard works, of his dispensation. If the prophet head did not have that authority, we would never have gotten the books of Moses; we never would have gotten the Joseph Smith translations, etc. If the older scriptures that passed through apostasies held precedence, we never could have received the Joseph Smith Translations. The prophet head of the dispensation holds precedence over the older scriptures that passed through apostasy, and it is his duty to segregate them, provide translations, etc. Some scriptures, the Lord says, are "not important, avoid"; others, the Lord says "translate this by my power," and it is the duty of the faithful members of that dispensation to stick with what that prophet head laid out and to avoid the things deemed unworthy of time. This means the next things we put on our "Pyramid of Doctrine" are "Joseph Smith (Dispensation Head)" followed by "Standard Works (Set Forth by Dispensation Head)."

**1 Nephi 15**

> **24** And I said unto them that it was the word of God; and whoso would hearken unto the word of God, and would hold fast unto it, they would never perish; neither could the temptations and the fiery darts of the adversary overpower them unto blindness, to lead them away to destruction

**J. Reuben Clark, Jr.**

> I tell you we are beginning to follow along the course of the early Christian church. So long as that church was persecuted from without, it prospered, but when it began to be polluted from within, the church began to wither. There is creeping into our midst, and I warn you brethren about it, and I urge you to meet it, a great host of sectarian doctrines that have no place amongst us. The gospel in its simplicity, is to be found in the revelations, the teachings of the Prophet and the early leaders of the Church.
>
> (*Conference Report,* October 1944)

**Hugh Nibley**

> Once men start "clarifying" the words of the prophets, they can rewrite the book; God will not tolerate that. If, with the passing generations, Moses tells them, they should dilute it or corrupt it, they will not be merely reprimanded but utterly destroyed—scattered among the nations and reduced to pitifully small numbers (Deuteronomy 4:25–27). ...
>
> They are to take good care of the holy book, keeping it carefully guarded in the Ark of the Covenant "for a witness against thee," that is, it will always be there as a standard to judge them by (Deuteronomy 31:25–26). Thus they will be left without excuse, "for this commandment this day ... is not hidden from you, nor is it something far off. Not in heaven, that you should say: Who shall go up for us to heaven and bring it unto us? ... You don't have to send anyone over the sea to fetch it, ... but the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it" (Deuteronomy 30:11–14).
>
> (*Approaching Zion,* Chapter 7, p. 179)

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

> "... we cannot specifically and definitely categorize the various spirits; but we do know that the noblest and the greatest and the mightiest among them were ordained to be ***heads of dispensations***—to be the individuals who, ***for their era and age and dispensation,*** would commence the spread ***of eternal truth*** on earth. We know, for instance, with reference to Moses, who was the head of one of these dispensations, that "there arose not another prophet ... in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face" (Deuteronomy 34:10). That sets us a pattern. We know of men like Enoch, who so lived that he perfected his whole city and his whole people, and they were translated and taken up into heaven. We look back at Abraham and consider him to be the Father of the Faithful and rejoice that we are born as his seed.
>
> There is a limited number of mighty, noble spirits ***who headed the respective dispensations.*** How many we do not know; perhaps there were eight or ten or twenty, but the number does not matter. At any rate, we soon have a small group of select individuals who stand in intelligence and power and might next to the Lord Jehovah. In the same sense that he was like unto God, these chosen and select individuals who were destined ***to head his work*** for these long ages were like unto Christ. ...
>
> That is how we rank and place the prophet Joseph Smith: he is one of the great dispensation heads, and ***a dispensation head is a revealer for his age and his period of the knowledge of Christ and of salvation. Thus, the other prophets of the dispensation who are associated with him and who come after him, who sustain his work and bear record of him, become witnesses that he—the chief prophet of their age—revealed the Lord Jesus and hence made salvation available."***
>
> ("Joseph Smith: A Revealer of Christ," BYU Devotional Address, 3 September 1978, 6)

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

> The measure of a person's spiritual maturity is found in his or her loyalty to the Prophet Joseph Smith.
>
> (Joseph Fielding McConkie, *The Bruce R. McConkie Story: Reflections of a Son* (2003), 256. See also Bruce R. McConkie, "Joseph Smith: A Revealer of Christ," BYU Devotional Address, 3 September 1978, 6.)

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

> Joseph Smith was a prophet, called in these last days to receive by revelation the saving truths of the gospel and to stand as a legal administrator, having power from on high, to administer the ordinances of the gospel.
>
> Since these truths revealed through him are the ones which shall go forth to every nation before the Second Coming, it is little wonder that we find Moroni saying to Joseph Smith that his "name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people." (JS—H 1:33.)
>
> Nor is it any wonder when we later find the Lord saying to the Prophet: "The ends of the earth shall inquire after thy name, and fools shall have thee in derision, and hell shall rage against thee" ...
>
> And the day will come, in the providence of the Lord, when other nations, now closed to the message of truth, shall have their doors opened to us, and the elders of Israel will go in to tell the honest in heart in

those nations about Christ and the gospel of his kingdom that has come upon the earth in this day ***through the Prophet Joseph Smith.***

("That the Fulness of My Gospel Might Be Proclaimed," *Conference Report,* October 1970, p. 6)

**President Brigham Young**

It was decreed in the councils of eternity, long before the foundations of the earth were laid, that he should be the man, in the last dispensation of this world, to bring forth the word of God to the people and receive the fullness of the keys and power of the Priesthood of the Son of God. The Lord had his eye upon him ... [for he] was foreordained in eternity to preside over this last dispensation.

("Remarks," *Deseret News,* Oct. 26, 1859, 266; see also *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 544)

**Elder Craig C. Christensen**

Perhaps the most stunning passage in the Book of Mormon to young Joseph may have been the third chapter of 2 Nephi This chapter contains an ancient prophecy about a "choice seer" whom the Lord would raise up in the latter days—a seer named Joseph, named after his father. This future prophet would be "esteemed highly" and would do a work "of great worth" unto his people. He would "be great like unto Moses" and would be given "power to bring forth [God's] word."15 (See 2 Nephi 3:6–15) Consider how Joseph Smith must have felt as he realized that this prophecy was about him! He was not just translating history; he was translating a vision of the last days, of the miraculous Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ—and Joseph himself would help fulfill it!

Today, almost 200 years later, it's easy to see how this prophecy has been realized. We know about the great things Joseph accomplished as the Lord's prophet. But remember that when Joseph translated this prophecy, he had done few of the things the prophets foretold. He was still a young man in his early 20s. The Church had not yet been organized. There were no wards or branches, no missionaries, and no temples. Hardly anyone had heard of Joseph Smith, and some of those who had, actively opposed him. Now look at the great work the Lord has wrought by the hand of His servant Joseph, notwithstanding the opposition against him. Is not the fulfillment of this prophecy compelling evidence of the prophetic calling of Joseph Smith?

To any who may be questioning their testimony of Joseph Smith or are struggling with erroneous, misleading, or superficial information about his life and ministry, I invite you to consider the fruits—the many blessings that have come to us through the miraculous mission of Joseph Smith, the Prophet of the Restoration.

Because Joseph was a prophet, revelations and prophets are no longer a thing of the past. The "day of miracles"—of visions, healings, and ministering of angels—has not ceased.16 (See Moroni 7:35–37, Articles of Faith 1:7)

Because Joseph was a prophet, each of us has access to the power and blessings of the holy priesthood, including baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the sacrament.

Because Joseph was a prophet, we have the blessings and ordinances of the temple that bind us to God, make us His people, and manifest to us "the power of godliness," making it possible one day to "see the face of God, even the Father, and live."17 (Doctrine and Covenants 84:21–22)

Because Joseph was a prophet, we know that marriage and family are an essential part of God's plan for our happiness. We know that through temple ordinances and covenants, our cherished family relationships can endure eternally.

Because Joseph was a prophet, we have more than a window into heaven—the very doorway to the eternities is open to us. We can know "the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom [He has] sent."18 (John 17:3) Eternal life can be ours.

Most of all, because Joseph was a prophet, we have witness upon witness, testimony upon testimony, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Savior of the world. We have an unbroken chain of special witnesses of Jesus Christ, including our prophet today, President Thomas S. Monson; the counselors in the First Presidency; and the members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. To their witnesses, I add my humble yet certain testimony: Jesus Christ lives and leads His Church. Joseph Smith was and is the Prophet of the Restoration. The priesthood and authority of God are again on the earth. May we fearlessly declare our witness and our gratitude for this wonderful prophet, seer, and revelator of the Lord is my prayer in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

("A Choice Seer Will I Raise Up," General Conference, October 2016)

**Brigham Young**

"You cannot destroy the appointment of a prophet of God, but you can cut the thread that binds you to the prophet of God, and sink yourselves to hell"

(*Conference Report,* May 1963, p. 81)

**Joseph F. Smith**

We can accept nothing as authoritative but that which comes directly through the appointed channel, the constituted organizations of the Priesthood, which is the channel that God has appointed through which to make known His mind and will to the world. It was necessary prior to the organization of this Church, that God should select from the inhabitants of the earth some person through whom to reveal His will to mankind; and it pleased Him to select for this purpose the youthful and untutored boy ***Joseph Smith,*** as David of old was His choice, (1 Sam. 16:1–13) but as there was no Priesthood on the earth when Joseph was called, legally constituted by the authority of heaven to officiate in the name of the Lord, it was necessary therefore that someone should be selected as the first Elder (D&C 20:2) for the beginning of this work, for there has to be a beginning, and he was the one foreordained for the position which he occupied and filled. After calling and setting him apart for the work of introducing and establishing this Gospel of the kingdom, (Matt. 24:14) ***the Lord of course recognized him as His mouthpiece, as His authorized agent, if you please, and it would be absolutely inconsistent, unreasonable and absurd to suppose that after God had called one man and appointed him to this work, that He should pass him by and go to somebody else to accomplish the same purpose.*** (D&C 28:6–7) ***No sensible person would accept for one moment such a proposition.*** To seriously contemplate any such idea would be charging the Almighty with inconsistency, and with being the author of confusion, (1 Cor. 14:33) discord and schism. The kingdom of God never could be established on earth in any such way.

Through Joseph then, the Lord revealed Himself to the world and through him He chose the first Elders of the Church—***men who were honest in their hearts;*** men whom He knew would receive the word and ***labor in connection with Joseph*** in this great and important undertaking; and all that have been ordained to the Priesthood, and all that have been appointed to any position whatever in this Church, have received their authority and commission through this channel, appointed of God, with Joseph at the head. This is the order, and it could not be otherwise. ***God will not raise up another prophet, and another people to do the work that we have been appointed to do***. He will never ignore those who have stood firm and true from the commencement, as it were, of this work, and who are still firm and faithful, inasmuch as they continue faithful to their trust.

***And the moment that individuals look to any other source, that moment they throw themselves open to the seductive influences of Satan, and render themselves liable to become servants of the devil; they lose sight of the true order through which the blessings of the Priesthood are to be enjoyed; they step outside of the pale of the kingdom of God, and are on dangerous ground. Whenever you see a man rise up claiming to have received direct revelation from the Lord to the Church,***

***independent of the order and channel of the Priesthood, you may set him down as an impostor.*** God has not called you to go out to the world to be taught, or to receive revelations through apostates or strangers; but He has called and ordained you and sent you forth to teach (D&C 43:15) and lead people in the paths of righteousness and salvation.

("Delusive Spirits, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses,* Volume 24, Discourse 23, p. 187)

## Prophets and Apostles (With Vote)

**Brigham Young**

In trying all matters of doctrine, to make a decision valid, it is necessary to obtain a unanimous voice, (D&C 107:27 ) faith, and decision. In the capacity of a Quorum, the three First Presidents must be one in their voice—the Twelve Apostles must be unanimous in their voice, to obtain a righteous decision upon any matter that may come before them, as you may read in the Doctrine and Covenants (D&C 107:27). The Seventies may decide upon the same principle. (D&C 107:27) Whenever you see these Quorums unanimous in their declaration, you may set it down as true. Let the Elders get together, being faithful and true; and when they agree upon any point, you may know that it is true.

("Priesthood," *Journal of Discourses,* Volume 9, Discourse 17, pp. 91–92)

**What is "Official" LDS Doctrine?**

How do we know then, what is "doctrine", and what is not? ***First it must generally conform to what has already been revealed.*** "It makes no difference what is written or what anyone has said," wrote J. Fielding Smith, "if what has been said is in conflict with what the Lord has revealed, we can set it aside." The standard works, he explains, are the "measuring yardsticks, or balances, by which we measure every man's doctrine."[18]

Harold B. Lee expressed similar thoughts when he taught that any doctrine, advanced by anyone—regardless of position—that was not supported by the standard works, then "you may know that his statement is merely his private opinion." He recognized that the Prophet could bring forth new doctrine, but "when he does, [he] will declare it as revelation from God," ***after which it will be sustained by the body of Church.***[19]

The Prophet can add to the scriptures, but such new additions are presented by the First Presidency to the body of the Church and are accepted ***by common consent*** (by sustaining vote) as binding doctrine of the Church (See D&C 26:2; 107:27–31).[20] ***Until such doctrines or opinions are sustained by vote in conference, however, they are "neither binding nor the official doctrine of the Church."***[21]

[18] Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* 3 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1955), 3:203.
[19] John A. Tvedtnes, "The Nature of Prophets and Prophecy." (Unpublished, 1999, copy in my possession.)
[20] See also Bradford and Dahl, 395.
[21] Stephen E. Robinson, *Are Mormons Christian?* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992), 15.

(Foundation for Apologetic Information and Research (FAIR), https://www.fairlatterdaysaints.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/What_is_Mormon_Doctrine.pdf)

## Holy Ghost and Administration of Angels

We can be taught things by angels and the Holy Ghost that are doctrine, that have not been revealed to the church at large, but once again, it a) has to be consonant with doctrine that has already been revealed and b) has to be only for the benefit of that man or woman specifically. As soon as they go off teaching said doctrine to larger audiences outside the bounds of the keys, you may set them aside as imposters.

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

Our right to guidance from Holy Ghost.

We have the right to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, but we cannot have that guidance, if we wilfully refuse to consider the revelations that have been given to help us to understand and to guide us in the light and truth of the everlasting gospel. We cannot hope to have that guidance when we refuse to consider these great revelations which mean so much to us both temporally and spiritually.

Now if we find ourselves in this condition of unbelief or unwillingness to seek for the light and the knowledge which the Lord has placed within our reach, then we are liable or in danger of being deceived by evil spirits, the doctrines of devils, and the teachings of men. And when these false influences are presented before us, we will not have the distinguishing understanding by which we can segregate them and know that they are not of the Lord. And so we may become prey unto the ungodly, to the vicious, to the cunning, to the craftiness of men.

(*Doctrines of Salvation,* p. 43)

**2 Nephi 32**

**1** And now, behold, my beloved brethren, I suppose that ye ponder somewhat in your hearts concerning that which ye should do after ye have entered in by the way. But, behold, why do ye ponder these things in your hearts?

**2** Do ye not remember that I said unto you that after ye had received the Holy Ghost ye could speak with the tongue of angels? And now, how could ye speak with the tongue of angels save it were by the Holy Ghost?

**3** Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, I said unto you, feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do.

**4** Wherefore, now after I have spoken these words, if ye cannot understand them it will be because ye ask not, neither do ye knock; wherefore, ye are not brought into the light, but must perish in the dark.

**5** For behold, again I say unto you that if ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy Ghost, it will show unto you all things what ye should do.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

How Salvation Is Acquired

All men know that they must die. And it is important that we should understand the reasons and causes of our exposure to the vicissitudes of life and of death, and the designs and purposes of God in our coming into the world, our sufferings here, and our departure hence. What is the object of our coming into existence, then dying and falling away, to be here no more? It is but reasonable to suppose that God would reveal something in reference to the matter, and it is a subject we ought to study more than any other. We ought to study it day and night, for the world is ignorant in reference to their true condition and relation. If we have any claim on our Heavenly Father for anything, it is for knowledge on this important subject. Could we read and comprehend all that has been written from the days of Adam, on the relation of man to God and angels in a future state, we should know very little about it. Reading the experience of others, or the revelation given to them, can never give us a comprehensive view of our condition and true relation to God. Knowledge of these things can only be obtained by experience through the ordinances of God set forth for that purpose. Could you gaze into heaven five minutes, you would know more than you would by reading all that ever was written on the subject.

We are only capable of comprehending that certain things exist, which we may acquire by certain fixed principles. If men would acquire salvation, they have got to be subject, before they leave this world, to certain

rules and principles, which were fixed by an unalterable decree before the world was.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 324)

**Mosiah 27:14. An Angel Sent from God**

The ministering of angels must be in harmony with the will of God and does not always occur according to the timetable of the petitioner. Speaking of a man who had prayed for the visitation of angels, President Wilford Woodruff (1807–98) said:

"I said to him that if he were to pray a thousand years to the God of Israel for that gift, it would not be granted, unless the Lord had a motive in sending an angel to him. I told him that the Lord never did nor never will send an angel to anybody merely to gratify the desire of the individual to see an angel. If the Lord sends an angel to anyone, He sends him to perform a work that cannot be performed only by the administration of an angel. I said to him that those were my views. The Lord had sent angels to men from the creation of the world, at different times, but always with a message or with something to perform that could not be performed without. I rehearsed to him different times when angels appeared to men. Of course, I referred to the angel visiting Joseph Smith; The Revelator John said that in the last days an angel would fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to them that dwelt on the earth. The reason it required an angel to do this work was, the Gospel was not on the earth. The Gospel and the Priesthood had been taken from among men. Hence God had to restore it again.

"Now, I have always said, and I want to say it to you, that the Holy Ghost is what every Saint of God needs. It is far more important that a man should have that gift than he should have the ministration of an angel, unless it is necessary for an angel to teach him something that he has not been taught" ("The Administration of Angels," in Brian H. Stuy, comp. *Collected Discourses,* 5 vols. [1987–92], 5:233).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual,* 2009, pp. 165–166)

**Elder David A. Bednar**

Some overzealous and even fanatical individuals or groups have claimed to receive spiritual direction to say or do the thing that are contrary to the established doctrine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It is vitally important to always remember that the Holy Ghost will NOT prompt an individual to violate sacred covenants and disobey God's commandments.

The spirit of the Lord will NOT prompt any person to think or act in the manner that is contrary to the doctrine and the authorized practices of the savior's restored Church as contained in the Holy scriptures, in the repeated teachings of the Lord's apostles and prophets, and in authorized proclamations and declarations of the Council of the First Presidency of the Twelve Apostles.

The Lord declared, "Behold, mine house is a house of order... and not a house of confusion" (D&C 132:8). If a person purports to receive revelation for purposes outside of his or her particular ecclesiastical calling or responsibilities then you can be sure that such Revelations are NOT from the Lord—such as a church member who professes to receive revelation to guide the church at the local or general level, or a person who invokes the principle of revelation to guide another person over whom he or she has no presiding authority according to the order of the church.

I repeat again for emphasis the warning of the Prophet Joseph Smith: "Nothing is a greater injury to the children of men than to be under the influence of a false spirit when they think they have the Spirit of God" (*Times and Seasons,* April 1, 1842, 744. In *Joseph Smith Papers*).

(*The Spirit of Revelation,* 2021)

**2 Nephi 25:4. "Filled with the Spirit of Prophecy"**

President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972) clarified the phrase "the spirit of prophecy" and how we might attain this gift:

"Revelation may be given to every member of the Church. The Prophet said that every man should be a prophet; that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. It is not only the privilege but the duty of each member of the Church to know the truth which will make him free. This he cannot know unless it is revealed to him. ...

"The gift of the Holy Ghost is given to the members of the Church so that they may have the spirit of prophecy and revelation. Let it be understood however, that they will not receive revelation for the guidance of the Church" (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 2 vols. [1953], 2:217–18).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual,* 2009, p. 92)

**Elder M. Russell Ballard**

So keep your eyes riveted on the leadership of the Church. While individuals may falter, the body of general Church leadership will remain steadfast and true. If someone tells you that they have received revelation that the First Presidency and the Twelve have not received, run away from them.

("When Shall These Things Be," BYU Speeches, March 12, 1996)

**Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow**

From the Life of Lorenzo Snow

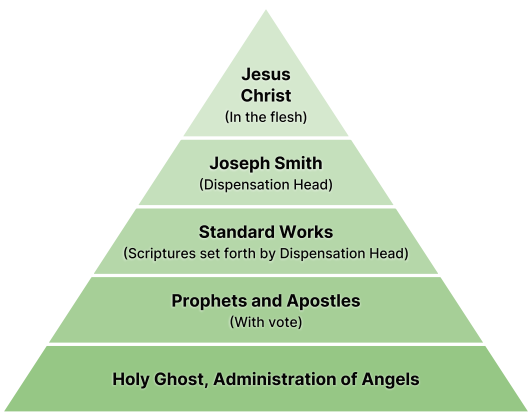
In the spring of 1840, Lorenzo Snow was in Nauvoo, Illinois, preparing to leave for a mission in England. He visited the home of his friend Henry G. Sherwood, and he asked Brother Sherwood to explain a passage of scripture. "While attentively listening to his explanation," President Snow later recalled, "the Spirit of the Lord rested mightily upon me—the eyes of my understanding were opened, and I saw as clear as the sun at noonday, with wonder and astonishment, the pathway of God and man. I formed the following couplet which expresses the revelation, as it was shown me. ...

"As man now is, God once was:
"As God now is, man may be."

Feeling that he had received "a sacred communication" that he should guard carefully, Lorenzo Snow did not teach the doctrine publicly until he knew that the Prophet Joseph Smith had taught it. ***Once he knew the doctrine was public knowledge, he testified of it frequently.***

("Chapter 5: The Grand Destiny of the Faithful," Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Lorenzo Snow, p. 83)

## The Pyramid of Doctrine




Doctrine in the Church

## War

So what do we do when we have conflicts between different things said by different people? War. Period.

If we have a quote from Joseph Smith Jr. that says one thing and something said by an Apostle that contradicts it, what do we do? We either a) try to make what the Apostle said fit into what Joseph Smith laid out or b) if we can't make it fit, we throw it out! A king is greater than a jack. What if we have a *million* quotes from Apostles?! Doesn't matter. The number does not matter if it conflicts with things higher on the pyramid—you make it fit or you throw it out. Period.

If Joseph Smith says "the sky is blue," it doesn't matter if ten million people pray about it and learn "the sky is orange"—they are all wrong. The numbers only help with concerts of clarity when they are consonant with that above it. So when someone comes up to Micah and says, "lookie here! An Apostle says the sky is orange! That's yoooooour pyramid of truth!" do they know what they are talking about? No. They are ignorant, as the sky isn't orange. They could come up to me with a million and half quotes; it doesn't matter if what they have provided is lower on the pyramid, because truth and doctrine do NOT change, and THIS is the means by which the Lord reveals it to man. Period.

**President Harold B. Lee**

> It is not to be thought that every word spoken by the General Authorities is inspired, or that they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost in everything they read and write. Now you keep that in mind. I don't care what his position is, if he writes something or speaks something that goes beyond anything that you can find in the standard church works… you may immediately say, "Well, that is his own idea." And if he says something that contradicts what is found in the standard church works (I think that is why we call them "standard"–it is the standard measure of all that men teach), you may know by the same token that it is false, regardless of the position of the man who says it
>
> ("The Place of the Living Prophet, Seer and Revelator," address to Seminaries and Institutes of Religion Personnel, BYU, 8 July 1964, p. 14; Church CES Manual, *Living Prophets For A Living Church,* 1974, p. 66)

**Elder Neil L. Andersen**

> A few question their faith when they find a statement made by a Church leader decades ago that seems incongruent with our doctrine. There is an important principle that governs the doctrine of the Church. The doctrine is taught by all 15 members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve. It is not hidden in an obscure paragraph of one talk. True principles are taught frequently and by many. Our doctrine is not difficult to find.
>
> ( "Trial of Your Faith," General Conference, October 2012)

**Elder D. Todd Christofferson**

> "It should be remembered that not every statement made by a Church leader, past or present, necessarily constitutes doctrine. It is commonly understood in the Church that a statement made by one leader on a single occasion often represents a personal, though well-considered, opinion, not meant to be official or binding for the whole Church. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that 'a prophet [is] a prophet only when he [is] acting as such'
>
> ("The Doctrine of Christ," General Conference, April 2012)

**Elder Mark E. Petersen**

> How do these false teachers lead people astray? They do so by attacking the fundamental doctrines of the Church. They attack the Authorities of the Church. They attack the teachings of the Authorities. They seek to develop doctrinal disputes among the people to undermine their faith, and they lead people into apostasy when they do such things as that. Very often false teachers who have come among us endeavor to justify their position by claiming to have received some revelation or dream directing them, they say, in the paths which they tread.
>
> ("Be Ye Not Deceived," *Conference Report,* October 1945, p. 89)

**Joseph F. Smith**

> We can accept nothing as authoritative but that which comes directly through the appointed channel, the constituted organizations of the priesthood, which is the channel that God has appointed through which to make known His mind and will to the world… Whenever you see a man rise up claiming to have received direct revelation from the Lord to the Church, independent of the order and channel of the priesthood, you may set him down as an impostor.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 24, Discourse 23, pp. 188–189, June 21, 1883)

## No More Doctrine Until We Learn and Live What We Have

Another important piece of information to know is that we as Saints will receive no more *doctrine* collectively until we learn and live what we have already received collectively, meaning that until we are sanctified as a group and are marching back to redeem and build the New Jerusalem, we will receive no more *doctrine* for the church collectively—policy changes sure, but doctrine, no. Anyone who teaches you anything different is making the Lord a liar. So what the prophets and apostles have been doing for years and years now has been sanctifying the church and holding and exercising the keys of salvation, and as they have been going about doing that, they have changed church policy a lot. If we want more doctrine collectively, we need to learn and live what we have already been given ***first.*** Everything else must be obtained only for the individual.

**President Joseph F. Smith**

> We have nothing that is not in common with the Latter-day Saints. We know nothing, and we will preach nothing to the people except that which the Lord God has revealed, and we advise and counsel those who are in authority, and whose duty and business it is to teach and preach the principles of the gospel to the world and to the Latter-day Saints, to confine their teachings and their instructions to the word of God that has been revealed. ***There is a great deal that has been revealed that has not yet been lived up to, I assure you. There is a great deal yet remaining to be learned.***
>
> There is a great deal that is yet to be taught in the spirit of instruction, and there is a great deal that has been revealed through the Prophet Joseph and his associates that the people have not yet received in their hearts,
>
> ***When we obey and are capable of observing the precepts of the gospel and the laws of God and the requirements of heaven, which have already been revealed,*** we will be far better off and nearer the goal of perfection in wisdom, knowledge and power than we are today. ***When that time comes, then there are other things still greater yet to be revealed to the people of God.***
>
> ***Until we do our duty, however, in that which we have received, until we are faithful over the things that are now committed into our hands, until we will live our religion as we have it now. as the Lord has given it to us, to add commandments, to add light and intelligence to us over that which we have already received, which we have not yet fully obeyed, would be to add condemnation upon our heads.***
>
> It is enough for us to live in the light of present inspiration and present revelation and for each individual member of the Church to keep the commandments of the Lord and labor in the Church as the Spirit may give him and her guidance in the performance of duty. ***Every soul of us is entitled to inspiration from God, to know what is our duty, and***

***how we are to do it***. We have not learned it yet, not all of us, but we are in a fair way to learn. The Lord is still patient: he is long-suffering; he is full of love and graciousness towards all, and we are doing a little better all the time. I believe we are a little more faithful in the performance of our duties than we have been in the past; yet there is great room for improvement.

(*Conference Report,* October 1917)

**Hugh Nibley**

Today we ignore the documents. What do we have that Joseph gave us? Only books. The ordinances in the temple, as well as everything else, are all contained in the books he left behind. Although these were books written by men, God considers them of great value, and the angels do too. When the angel Gabriel came to Zacharias or to Mary, or when the angel Moroni came to Joseph Smith, what did they do? The margin of the New Testament will tell you that all the angel did was quote ancient scripture. Moroni came four times to Joseph Smith, quoting scriptures so well that Joseph knew them all by heart. He said some were different from what we find in our scriptures, and some were very much alike, but Moroni came four times, so that Joseph knew the message exactly. Still, he just quoted the words of ancient prophets who had lived before.

When the Lord himself came, what did he do after the resurrection? We read at the end of Luke 24, "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he laid out all the scriptures to them and their eyes were opened" (Luke 24:27).

What did he do to the Nephites? He came to them; they didn't understand him. He read the scriptures to them. He insisted on going through the books, while also seeing to it that the books were all there. When the prophecy of Samuel the Lamanite came up missing, he said, "We've got to have this. Why didn't you write it down?" Nephi's face got very red, and he said, "Yes, we did forget to put that in, didn't we?" The Lord responded, "Well, see that you do put it in" (cf. 3 Nephi 23:8–14).

The Lord and the angels are concerned with the books written by the ancients. As Joseph said, "The immediate will of heaven is contained in the scriptures." (TPJS pg. 54) We are very much concerned with these things, very close to the books. ***This gives the books a timeless position. The Lord has said he will not reveal to us again what is already to be found in the books. We must read with great care, to make sure it isn't there already, before we ask for any more revelation.*** ...

***We shouldn't expect new messages. Let us go to the books we have.***

(*Approaching Zion,* Chapter 10, pp. 295–297)

**George Albert Smith**

He [the Lord] will continue to feed us the bread of life as we need it from time to time, if we will but live in accordance with the teachings we have already received.

(*Conference Report,* October 1912, p. 118)

## Parting Thoughts

**Hugh Nibley**

By neglecting to consult the writings of the ancients, we miss the fact that in their trials and triumphs, individually and collectively, they had to undergo exactly the same trials that we do: the props of the plays, the technology and the fashions, wear out and are constantly being replaced, but the issues and the plot always remain the same.

(*Approaching Zion,* Chapter 9, p. 275)

**D&C 130**

**18** Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection.

**19** And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come.

**Heber C. Kimball**

If the truth, simply told, is unwelcome to people, it is because they are themselves guilty of sin unrepented of; and by this ye may know that ye need repentance.

The faithful love the truth, though it may be told in the most simple manner; it is sweeter to them than honey or the honeycomb; they are no more afraid of it than they would be afraid of eating a piece of good honey. And to the same extent that they love the truth plainly and simply told, do they hate a lie, and the more so when it is dressed up in the garb of truth to deceive the unwary. Truth [p. 209b] is the sanctifier of those who love it and are guided by it, and will exalt them to the presence of God; while falsehood corrupts and destroys, or, to use a common scriptural figure, it lays the axe at the root of the tree. Luke 3:9 As the axe cuts down and destroys the fruitless trees that cumber the ground, so do wicked acts destroy and overthrow all who persist in them.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 11, Discourse 32, in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, April 4, 1866)

**Doctrine and Covenants 131**

**1** In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;

**2** And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];

**3** And if he does not, he cannot obtain it.

**4** He may enter into the other, but that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase.

**5** (May 17th, 1843.) The more sure word of prophecy means a man's knowing that he is sealed up unto eternal life, by revelation and the spirit of prophecy, through the power of the Holy Priesthood.

**6** ***It is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance.***

**Joseph F. Smith**

Among the Latter-day Saints, the preaching of false doctrines disguised as truths of the gospel, may be expected from people of two classes, and practically from these only; they are:

First—The hopelessy ignorant, whose lack of intelligence is due to their indolence and sloth, who make but feeble effort, if indeed any at all, to better themselves by reading and study; those who are afflicted with a dread disease that may develop into an incurable malady—laziness.

Second—The proud and self vaunting ones, who read by the lamp of their own conceit; who interpret by rules of their own contriving; will have to become a law unto themselves, and so pose as the sole judges of their own doings. More dangerously ignorant than the first.

Beware of the lazy and the proud.

(*Gospel Doctrine,* p. 373)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

When you climb up a ladder, you must begin at the bottom, and ascend step by step, until you arrive at the top; and so it is with the principles of the Gospel—you must begin with the first, and go on until you learn all the principles of exaltation. But it will be a great while after you have passed through the veil before you will have learned them.

("The Righteous to Dwell in Everlasting Burnings," *TPjS,* p. 348)

# Understanding Prophecy

## Why Prophecy?

**1 Nephi 20 (see also Isaiah 48)**

> **3** Behold, I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I showed them. I did show them suddenly.
>
> **4** And I did it because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;
>
> **5** And I have even from the beginning declared to thee; before it came to pass I showed them thee; and I showed them for fear lest thou shouldst say—Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image hath commanded them.
>
> **6** Thou hast seen and heard all this; and will ye not declare them? And that I have showed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.
>
> **7** They are created now, and not from the beginning, even before the day when thou heardest them not they were declared unto thee, lest thou shouldst say—Behold I knew them.
>
> **8** Yea, and thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time thine ear was not opened; for I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.
>
> **9** Nevertheless, for my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain from thee, that I cut thee not off.
>
> **10** For, behold, I have refined thee, I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.
>
> **11** For mine own sake, yea, for mine own sake will I do this, for I will not suffer my name to be polluted, and I will not give my glory unto another.

**(17-3) Isaiah 48:1–8. Judah's Apostasy**

> Isaiah 48:1–2 describes Israel's apostasy from God's revealed ways. While these chosen people of the Lord have "come forth out of the waters of … baptism" (1 Nephi 20:1; compare Isaiah 48:1–2 with 1 Nephi 20:1–2), "they do not stay themselves upon the … Lord" (1 Nephi 20:2). In other words, they have apostatized. For this reason, the Lord elected to demonstrate His powers of omniscience. He had, He told them, "declared … things from the beginning," that is, He spoke of them before their occurrence, and then "shewed them … suddenly" by bringing them to pass (Isaiah 48:3). This He had done, He said, lest the apostates should say, "Mine idol hath done them" (v. 5), or "Behold, I knew them" (v. 7), that is to say, "I already knew that." The Lord then promised to defer His anger but utterly refused to give His glory to false gods or to suffer His name to be polluted (compare v. 11 with 1 Nephi 20:11). ***Thus the Lord's purpose for revealing the future unto man is partly made clear: it is the solid proof that He is truly God, for no mute idol could possibly duplicate such a feat.***
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings-Malachi* (Third edition), 2003, p. 191)

The main purpose or function of prophecy is so that we can see that He truly is God, so that we have something to then build our structure of faith on, etc. If we understand this, then we understand what is and isn't a real prophecy, how prophecy will and will not be fulfilled, what prophecies we should focus on, etc., etc.

If the children of Light (let alone the world) could not see and identify the fulfillments of a prophecy, who would the prophecy be for? Of what benefit would it be for man? How would it help develop faith in an unchanging, loving Father in Heaven (*Lectures on Faith*)? Etc.

## How Was Prophecy Historically fulfilled?

**Elder Parley P. Pratt**

> CHAPTER I.
>
> ON PROPHECY ALREADY FULFILLED.
>
> But, first, for the definite rule of interpretation. For this we will not depend on any man or commentary, for the Holy Ghost has given it by the mouth of Peter: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation." 2 Peter i, 20.
>
> There is one grand division to be kept constantly, in view in the study of prophecy; namely, the distinction between the past and the future. The reader should be careful to ascertain what portion has been fulfilled, and what remains to be fulfilled: always remembering Peter's rule of interpretation will apply to both. Now, if we should find in our researches that every prophecy which has been fulfilled to the present year, has been literally fulfilled, then it follows of necessity that ***every prophecy which is yet future will not fail of a* literal *fulfilment.*** Let us commence with the days of Noah. Gen. vi, 17: "And behold I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die."
>
> In the verses which follow the above the Lord commands Noah to enter the Ark, and take with him animals of every kind, etc. And in the 22d verse it is written, "Thus did Noah, according to all that God commanded him, so did he." It was well for Noah that he was not well versed in the spiritualizing systems of modern divinity; for, under their benighted influence, he would never have believed that so marvelous a prophecy would have had a literal meaning and accomplishment. No, he would have been told that the flood meant a spiritual flood, and the Ark a spiritual Ark, and, the moment he thought otherwise, he would have been set down for a fanatic, knave, or fool; but it was so, that he was just simple enough to believe the prophecy literally. Here then is a fair sample of foreknowledge; for all the world, who did not possess it, perished by the flood.
>
> The next prediction we will notice is Gen. xv, 13-16. "And he said unto Abraham. Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterwards shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age; but in the fourth generation they shall come hither again, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full."
>
> The evil entreating of the children of Israel four hundred years, together with their coming out with great substance, and the judgment of God upon Egypt, as well as the death of Abraham in a good old age, are all facts too well known to need comment here; suffice it to say, that it is a striking example of the ***exact fulfilment of prophecy,*** uttered more than four hundred years before it had its accomplishment. From this we gather that none of those ancient men knew anything of the modern system of spiritualizing.
>
> Our next is Gen. xix, 12, 13: "And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place: for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxed great before the face of the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it." Now, Lot being simple enough to believe the thing in its literal sense, took as many of his family as would follow, and escaped for his life; to the great amusement, no doubt, of the Sodomites, who probably stood gazing after,

crying "Delusion, delusion!" they thinking all the while that the prophecy was only a figure. Here is an example of a man escaping from the flames by foreknowledge imparted to him, while the whole city perished. O! what a blessing that Lot had no knowledge of the modern manner of interpreting prophecy. ***If it had once entered his heart that he must come out of Sodom spiritually, instead of literally, it would have cost him his life.***

Let us examine a prophecy of Joseph in the land of Egypt. Gen. xli, 29-31: "Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt: and there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land: and the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it shall be very grievous." Joseph then proceeds to give directions for corn to be laid up in great abundance during the seven plenteous years, in order to provide against the famine. And Pharaoh, being no better versed in the school of modern divinity than his predecessors, never once thought of any other interpretation but the most literal, And thus he was the means, together with Joseph, in the hand of God, of saving, not only their nation, but the house of Israel, from famine. This is another striking example of the power of foreknowledge. It not only saved from famine, but it exalted Joseph from a dungeon to a palace; from the lowest degradation to the highest honor; so that they cried before him, "Bow the knee!" ***But, O! what death and mourning would have followed had they dreamed only of spiritual famine and spiritual corn.***

Having given a few plain examples of early ages, we will lightly touch upon some of the most remarkable events of prophecy, and its fulfilment, until we come down to the Jewish Prophets, where the field opens wide, touching in its progress the most remarkable events of all ages, and terminating in a full development of the opening glories of the last days.

One remarkable instance, concerning Elijah the Prophet, was, that he prophesied to Ahab that it should not rain for three years and upwards, which came to pass according to his word. There is also a remarkable instance of Hazael, the Syrian, who came to Elisha to inquire of the Lord concerning the king of Syria, his master, who was sick. The Prophet, earnestly beholding him, burst into tears: and Hazael asked him, saying, "Why weepest thou?" and he, answering, said, "The Lord hath showed me that thou shalt be king over Syria." And he then proceeded to unfold unto him the cruelties which he would afterwards exercise towards Israel, which are too horrible to mention here, lest in so doing I might offend the delicate ear. But Hazael, astonished to hear these things predicted concerning himself, which at that time filled him with horror, exclaimed with surprise, "But what? is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" Yet astonishing to tell, ***all was afterwards fulfilled to the very letter.***

In the 21st chapter, 2 Chron., it is written that there came a writing to Jehoram from Elijah, which, after stating the great wickedness of which he had been guilty, in turning to idolatry, and also murdering his brethren of his father's house, who were better than himself, proceeds thus: "Behold, with a great plague will the Lord smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods; and thou shalt have great sickness by disease of the bowels, until thy bowels fall out, by reason of thy sickness, day by day." In the same chapter it is written, that the Philistines and Arabians came against him, and took his wives, and children, and goods captive; and after all this, the Lord smote him in his bowels with an incurable disease, and his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness, so he died of sore disease.

In the 6th chapter of Joshua, 26th verse, there is a wonderful prediction concerning Jericho: "Cursed be the man before the Lord, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho. He shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it."

After this curse the city of Jericho lay waste for ages, none daring to rebuild it at the expense of their first-born and of their youngest son; until after a long succession of judges and kings, when hundreds of years had passed, Hiel the Bethelite, who lived in the days of Ahab, probably supposing that the Lord had forgotten the curse pronounced upon it by Joshua, ventured to rebuild the city: but no sooner had he laid the foundation thereof than Abiram his first-born died, and, still persevering in the hardness of his heart, he set up the gates thereof, with the loss of his youngest son, Segub, ***according to the word of the Lord*** by Joshua; see 1 Kings, xvi, 34. ...

We will now [turn] to Nebuchadnezzar, whom the Lord, by the mouth of Jeremiah, calls His servant, to execute His judgment upon the nations. It seems that the Lord exalted this great man, and made him a king of kings, and lord of lords, arming him with His own sword, and clothing him with power and authority, for the express purpose of executing His judgments, and scourging and humbling all the nations of the earth. Jeremiah, chapter xxv, says that the Lord purposed to bring Nebuchadnezzar and his army against Jerusalem, and against all the nations round about, that he might bring them to desolation and captivity for seventy years; and after seventy years, He would turn and punish the king of Babylon and that nation for their iniquity. Now, who can trace the history of the fulfilment of these great events, ***so exactly pointed out by Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Ezekiel, and not be struck with astonishment and wonder at the marvellous*** **gift of prophecy** ***enabling men in those days to read the history of the future as they read the history of the past?*** Indeed, the reader of history in the nineteenth century, holding in his hand the history of the Babylonians, Medes and Persians, Greeks, Romans and Egyptians, together with that of the Jews, will hardly render himself more familiar with the events which transpired among those nations, than the Prophets were seventy years previous to their accomplishment.

The Jews were reduced to subjection by Nebuchadnezzar; their city, Jerusalem, was burned, together with their temple; their princes, nobles, and people were carried to Babylon, together with all their holy things. All the particulars of this destruction and captivity were distinctly foretold by Jeremiah, and the time of its continuance, viz., seventy years. After subduing the Jews, the king of Babylon marched his army against Tyre, the city of merchants, situated at the haven of the sea, surrounded not only by the sea, but by a strong wall. A hold so strong required the utmost skill and perseverance of Nebuchadnezzar and his whole army, who labored incessantly for a long time, and at length succeeded in taking Tyre, and bringing it into captivity for seventy years. After which they returned and established their city, for Jeremiah had previously foretold the reduction of Tyre, its captivity for seventy years, and its restoration at the expiration of that time. After the restoration of Tyre, the city flourished for a time, but was afterwards reduced to an entire desolation. Its ruined fragments are seen to this day in the bottom of the sea; its site has become a barren rock, only occupied by poor fishermen. ***All this desolation, and even its present appearance of desolation and perpetual waste, were clearly pointed out by the Prophets.*** ...

What powerful argument, what mighty influence was it which caused Cyrus to be convinced that it was the God of heaven who dwelt at Jerusalem, who alone was God, and who had done all these things? He had not been traditioned in the belief of the true God, nor of the holy Scriptures. Nay, he had ever been very zealous in the worship of idols; it was to idols he looked for assistance in the former part of his life. I reply, it was the power of God, made manifest by prophecy and its fulfilment; not in a spiritualized sense, ***not in some obscure, uncertain, or dark, mysterious way, which was difficult to be understood; but in positive, literal, plain demonstration, which none could gainsay or resist.*** Isaiah says that this was the object the Lord had in view when he revealed such plainness. And Cyrus manifested that it had the desired effect.

***I would here remark that when we come to treat of that part of prophecy which yet remains to be fulfilled, we shall bring proof positive that the heathen nations of the latter days are to be convinced in the same way that Cyrus was; that is, there are certain events plainly predicted in the Prophets, yet future, which, when fulfilled, will convince all the heathen nations of the true God, and they shall know that he hath***

***spoken and performed it. And all the great and learned men of Christendom, and all societies, who put any other than a* literal *construction on the word of prophecy, shall stand confounded, and be constrained to acknowledge that all has come to pass even as it is written.***

But to return to our research of prophecy and its fulfilment. The Prophets had not only predicted the reduction of Babylon by Cyrus, but they had denounced its fate through all ages, until reduced to entire desolation, never to be inhabited, not even as a temporary residence for the wandering Arab: "And the Arabian shall not pitch tent there." See Isaiah, xiii, 19-22.

Mr. Joseph Wolfe, the celebrated Jewish missionary, while traveling in Chaldea, inquired of the Arabs whether they pitched their tents among the ruins of Babylon, to which they replied in the negative, declaring their fears that, should they do so, Nimrod's ghost would haunt them. ***Thus all the predictions of the Prophets concerning that mighty city have been fulfilled.***

***Edom also presents a striking fulfilment of plain and pointed predictions in the Prophets.*** These predictions were pronounced upon Edom at a time when its soil was very productive and well cultivated, and everywhere abounding in flourishing towns and cities. But now its cities have become heaps of desolate ruins, only inhabited by the cormorant, bittern, and by wild beasts, serpents, etc., and its soil has become barren; the Lord has cast upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness, and it has been waste from generation to generation, in express fulfilment of the word of prophecy. ...

***We will now proceed to show how exactly the prophecies were fulfilled* literally *in the person of Jesus Christ.*** "Behold," said the Prophet, "a virgin shall conceive and bear a son." Again, Bethlehem should be the place of his birth, and Egypt, where he sojourned with his parents, the place out of which he was to be called. He turned aside to Nazareth, for it was written, "He shall be called a Nazarene." He rode into Jerusalem upon a colt, the foal of an ass, because the Prophet had said, "Behold thy King cometh, meek and lowly, riding upon a colt," etc. And again, saith the Prophet: "He shall be afflicted and despised; he shall be a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; he shall be led as a lamb to the slaughter, and, like a sheep dumb before his shearers, so he opened not his mouth; in his humiliation his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation, for his life is taken from the earth. He was wounded for our transgressions, and by his stripes we are healed; he was numbered with the transgressors; he made his grave with the rich." Not a bone of him is broken; they divide his raiment; cast lots for his vesture; give him gall and vinegar to drink; betray him for thirty pieces of silver; and finally, when it was finished, he rested in the tomb until the third day, and then rose triumphant, without seeing corruption. Now, kind reader, had you walked up and down with our dear Redeemer during his whole sojourn in the flesh, and had you taken pains to record the particular circumstances of his life and death, as they occurred from time to time, your history would not be a plainer one than the Prophets gave of him hundreds of years before he was born. There is one thing we would do well to notice concerning the manner in which the Apostles interpreted prophecy, and that is this—they simply quoted it, and recorded its literal fulfilment. By pursuing this course, they were enabled to bring it home to the hearts of the people in the Jewish synagogues, with such convincing proof that they were constrained to believe the supposed impostor whom they had crucified was the Messiah. But had they once dreamed of rendering a spiritualizing or uncertain application, like the teachers of the present day, all would have been uncertainty and doubt, and demonstration would have vanished from the earth.

***Having taken a view of the Old Testament Prophets, concerning prophecy and its fulfilment, and having shown clearly that nothing but a literal fulfilment was intended, the objector may inquire whether the same mode will apply to the predictions contained in the New Testament.*** We will therefore bring a few important instances of prophecy, and its fulfilment, from the New Testament; after which we shall be prepared to enter the vast field which is still future. One of the most remarkable prophecies in sacred writ is recorded by Luke, chap, xxi, 20-24: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto; for these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days; for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people; and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." This prophecy involves the fate of Jerusalem and the temple, and the whole Jewish nation, for at least eighteen hundred years. About the year seventy, the Roman army compassed Jerusalem. The disciples remembered the warning which had been given them by their Lord and Master forty years before, and fled to the mountains. The city of Jerusalem was taken, after a long and tedious siege, in which the Jews suffered the extreme of famine, pestilence and the sword; filling houses with the dead, for want of a place to bury them, while women ate their own children, for want of all things. In this struggle there perished, in Judea, near one million and a half of Jews, besides those taken captive. Their country was laid waste, their city burned, their temple destroyed, and the miserable remnant dispersed abroad into all the nations of the earth; in which situation they have continued ever since, being driven from one nation to another, often falsely accused of the worst of crimes, for which they have been banished and their goods confiscated. Indeed, they have been mostly accounted as outlaws among the various nations; the soles of their feet have found no rest, and they have been a hiss and a byword; and people have said, "These are the people of the Lord, and are gone forth out of his land."

CHAPTER II.

ON THE FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY YET FUTURE.

***What is Prophecy but History reversed?***

Having made the discovery and produced sufficient proof that the prophecies, thus far, have been LITERALLY fulfilled—to the very letter—we hope the reader will never lose sight of the same rule with regard to those yet future. And, while we stand upon the threshold of futurity, with the wonders of unborn time about to open upon our view, presenting before our astonished vision the most mighty and majestic scenes, the most astonishing revolutions, the most extraordinary destructions, as well as the most miraculous displays of the power and majesty of Jehovah, in His great restoration of His long dispersed covenant people from the four quarters of the earth: I say, as these scenes are about to open to our view, let us bow before the great I AM, in the name of Jesus, and pray in faith for His Spirit to enlarge our hearts and enlighten our minds, that we may understand and believe all that is written, however miraculous it may be.

(*A Voice of Warning,* emphasis added)

## Avoid Speculation

The Prophet **Joseph Smith** said,

> I make this broad declaration, that whenever God gives a vision of an image, or beast, or figure of any kind, He always holds Himself responsible to give a revelation or interpretation of the meaning thereof, otherwise we are not responsible or accountable for our belief in it. Don't be afraid of being damned for not knowing the meaning of a vision or figure, if God has not given a revelation or interpretation of the subject.
>
> ("Exceptions to Bible Translations," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 291)

**Student Manual**

> For reasons not at present known, the Lord has not revealed the key for interpreting [certain] passage[s], and, until He does so, speculation and calculations are pointless.
>
> ("Daniel 12:7–13," *Old Testament Student Manual Kings-Malachi* (Third edition), 2003, p. 309)

Examples of Speculation:

- The beasts of Daniel
- All of the "periods of weeks" mentioned in Daniel
- The dragon beast of Revelation
- Exact dates (including the opening of seals in heaven)
- The two goats in Daniel
- John's creature that mounts the Whore of all the Earth
- The mark of the beast (666)
- Apocryphal writings (any and all non-canonized scriptures)

## Warning

If you are watching videos, reading papers or books, etc. from people who spend the majority of their time speculating over these things (the "what ifs" of the gospel), you are choosing to spend your time in pointless endeavors. Period. But does this mean that we are to not study signs of the times? No. Does this mean that we don't have enough information to make intelligent conclusions regarding last day timelines? No. The Lord said that the children of the light will have enough light to be able discern timeline.

**Elder Orson Pratt**

> The day is at hand, the morning has broken, the sun of the Gospel has arisen in the eastern horizon, and is beginning to shine with a degree of splendor. The time is near—how near, no man knoweth: the day and the hour when the Son of Man shall come is a secret. In a revelation given to this Church, it is said that no man shall know until he comes; therefore we cannot expect to know the day nor the hour; but we know it is near at hand, and what a consolation it is. There may be men that will know within a year—that will have revelation to say within one or two years when the Lord shall appear. I do not know that there is anything against this.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 8, Discourse 10)

Orson Pratt said that there will be enough information that there will be Saints who will be able to know the exact order of events to occur—but is it important to know? Should we even bother? Is it important for our salvation?

**Elder Orson Pratt**

> But the Latter-day Saints are not in darkness; they are the children of light, although many of us will actually be asleep. We shall have to wake up and trim up our lamps, or we shall not be prepared to enter in; for we shall all slumber and sleep in that day, and some will have gone to sleep from which they will not awake until they awake up in darkness without any oil in their lamps. But, as a general thing, the Saints will understand the signs of the times, if they do lie down and get to sleep. Others have their eyes closed upon the prophecies of the ancient Prophets; and not only that, but they are void of the spirit of prophecy themselves. When a man has this, though he may appeal to ancient Prophets to get understanding on some subjects he does not clearly understand, yet, as he has the spirit of prophecy in himself, he will not be in darkness; he will have a knowledge of the signs of the times; he will have a knowledge of the house of Israel, and of Zion, of the ten tribes, and of many things and purposes and events that are to take place on the earth; and he will see coming events, and can say such an event will take place, and after that another, and then another; and after that the trumpet shall sound, and after that certain things will take place, and then another trump shall sound, &c., &c.; and he will have his eye fixed on the signs of the times, and that day will not overtake him unawares; but upon the nations it will come as a thief upon the mighty men and upon the chief captains, who will gather up their hosts upon the mountains, hills, and valleys of Palestine, to fight against the Jews; and they will be as blind as the dumb ass; and right in the midst of their blindness the Lord will rend the heavens and stand his feet upon the Mount of Olives, and all the Saints will come with him, and the wicked will be destroyed from off the face of the earth.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 7, Discourse 29)

**Elder Parley P. Pratt**

> Whoever will look to the word of the Prophets, and to the sayings of Jesus Christ, on this subject, the same will be convinced that all the signs of which I have spoken are clearly pointed out as the signs of His coming. But, notwithstanding all these things are written, His coming will overtake the world unawares, as the flood did the people in the days of Noah. The reason is, they will not understand the Prophets. They will not endure sound doctrine; their ears are turned away from the truth, and turned to fables, because of false teachers, and the precepts of men; and what is still worse, when God sends men with the New and Everlasting Covenant, and clothes them with boldness to testify to the truth, they will be treated as the servants of God have been before them by the fallen... every[one]... will cleave to [their] own way, and will unite in saying: "There is no need of these ... things, [our] way is right;" while at the same time they are walking in as many different ways as there are sects, and only agree in persecuting and speaking all manner of evil against the fishers and hunters whom God shall send. But, thank heaven, there are individuals in every sect who are humbly seeking the truth, and who will know the voice of truth, and be gathered out, and planted in the New and Everlasting Covenant; and they will be adopted into the family of Israel, and will be gathered with them, and be partakers of the same covenant of promise. Yea, as Jeremiah says, in the sixteenth chapter of his Prophecies: "The Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanities, and things wherein there is no profit." But as the Jews overlooked Christ's first coming, by not understanding the Prophets, and fastening their whole expectations on His glorious coming in the last days, to restore the kingdom to Israel, and avenge them of their enemies, and, by this mistake, were broken and scattered; so the Gentiles will overlook the prophecies concerning His second coming, by confounding them with the last judgment, which is to take place more than a thousand years afterward. But this fatal mistake, instead of causing the Gentiles to be broken and scattered, will cause them to be ground to powder.
>
> O my brethren, according to the flesh, my soul mourns over you, and had I a voice like a trumpet, I would cry, Awake, awake and arouse from your slumber, for the time is fulfilled, your destruction is at the door, "for I have heard from the Lord God of Hosts, a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth!" Prepare to meet your God! And again, Awake, O house of Israel, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.
>
> ("Chapter II," *A Voice of Warning*)

**D&C 133:11. When Will Christ Come to Usher in His Millennial Reign?**

> **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** wrote:
>
> "Question: Does or will anyone know when the Lord will come? Answer: As to the day and hour, No; as to the generation, Yes.
>
> "Question: Who shall know the generation? Answer: The saints, the children of light, those who can read the signs of the times, those who treasure up the Lord's word so they will not be deceived.
>
> "Paul told the Thessalonians that 'the coming of the Lord' would be 'as travail upon a woman with child'; that where people of the world are concerned Jesus would come 'as a thief in the night,' that is unex-

pectedly and without warning; but that where 'the children of light' are concerned, the Lord would not come as 'a thief in the night,' for they are aware of the 'times and seasons' connected with his return. (1 Thess. 4:13–18; 5:1–7.) Thus, though the saints do not know the day, they are aware of the season. As a woman in travail feels the pains of the approaching birth, so the saints read the signs of the times; neither knows the exact moment of the anticipated happening, but both know the approximate time." (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 1:665–66; see also Matthew 24:36, 42; D&C 45:39; 49:7; 77:6, 12; 130:14–17.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition), 2001, p. 338)

So where are we, as children of the light, to gain this light and not speculation?

1. Prophecies and visions that have interpretations given and that are canonized
2. Stories that have been identified as "types of things to come"
3. Authoritative sources (scriptures, etc.)

In other words, the Pyramid of Truth.

Examples:

- Joseph being sold into Egypt as a type (Ether 13)
- Moses leading the children out of Egypt as a type (D&C 101, 103, 105)
- The times of the Gentiles
- Identifying what needs to take place during the 6th seal and what needs to happen during the 7th seal (D&C 77)
- The New Jerusalem events vs. the Old Jerusalem events vs. the Great and Dreadful Day (see Introduction)
- The desolating sickness that sweeps the land and paves the way for the overflowing scourge (D&C 45)
- The marvelous work and a wonder
- Etc.

If you are listening to videos or reading material from the Church or its members that deal with things like these, you will not be in "speculation zone," and thus you won't be pursuing pointless wastes of time.

## Spirit of Prophecy and Revelation

**Elder L. Aldin Porter**

Some years ago I enjoyed a stake conference assignment as a junior companion to Elder LeGrand Richards, who had, under the influence of this directing Spirit, reorganized a stake presidency. We were driving home; he was very pensive. After a rather long period of silence, I asked him if there was something he would like to teach me. Quietly he said, "We have too many in the Church who deny the spirit of prophecy and of revelation." That was it—he said no more about it. As I reminisced about the calling of the new stake president that day, it occurred to me then that this Church could not function for even one day without the spirit of prophecy and revelation.

But ours is a day of dwindling faith and increasing skepticism about sacred things. Our time reminds me of the period just prior to the coming of the resurrected Savior to this continent. They were very dark days.

Mormon recorded the roots of the problems that beset Nephite society when he said, "And it was because of the pride of their hearts, because of their exceeding riches, yea, it was because of their oppression to the poor, withholding their food from the hungry, withholding their clothing from the naked, and smiting their humble brethren upon the cheek, making a mock of that which was sacred, denying the spirit of prophecy and of revelation."

Later Mormon continues: "And because of their iniquity the church had begun to dwindle; and they began to disbelieve in the spirit of prophecy and in the spirit of revelation; and the judgments of God did stare them in the face."

("The Spirit of Prophecy," General Conference, October 1996)

**George A. Smith**

Now, it is not certain that the Prophet always reveals those secrets unto the people. It may happen in many instances, that the Lord will reveal unto his servants the Prophets many things that are to come, and yet leave those who are not enlightened by the Spirit of Prophecy to wait until those things transpire before they are apprised of them.

There appears to be in the midst of the Saints a very great stress laid upon the word "prophet," and the words of Amos seem to be definitely pointed at in the minds of a great many individuals, to show, as it were, there was but one. But when the Spirit of the Lord was poured out in the camp of Israel, and Eldad and Medad began to prophesy, persons whose minds were contracted went to Moses and complained that Eldad and Medad were prophesying. "Would to God," said Moses "that all the Lord's people were prophets!" (Num. 11:26-29) There are in the Church a variety of gifts, and these gifts are all combined together, and are necessary for the development of the principles we understand, the diffusion of knowledge, and the complete organization of the whole body. There are Apostles, Prophets, and Teachers, and all these officers bring about the great and complete organization of the whole. (Eph. 4:11-13) In tracing through the history of the sacred writings, we find that the Lord in some instances chose men that were ignorant. I presume he did this in many instances from necessity, for those who had been learned in the world were seldom found to possess humility enough to humble themselves before the Lord to get the Spirit of Prophecy, and to be a Prophet is to have the Spirit of Prophecy, and to have the testimony of Jesus, "for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," (Rev. 19:10) nothing more nor nothing less. The man who can testify that Jesus is the Christ has this testimony, and as he improves upon his gift he becomes a Prophet. It is not one individual, it is not three, it is not twelve individuals, but it is for all the Saints who have the testimony of Jesus and live in the exercise of that testimony. A man that does not foresee by the Spirit of God, who does not learn things to come by it, is not living up to his privilege and profession, is not living in the enjoyment of that testimony which he has received; he is blinded by the mists of darkness (1 Ne. 8:23) and is liable to fall into a snare. The Apostle Peter in exhorting his brethren tells them that it was necessary they should add to their faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Pet. 1:5-8) That is, that you will be made partakers of the Divine mind, (2 Pet. 1:4) the Holy Spirit dwelling in you, you will know for yourselves of the principles and the doctrines which you have received. The storms of adversity which surround us amount to nothing with the man who has this knowledge planted in his breast, he cares not for slanders, for abuse, for sacrifices or losses of earthly goods. He who does not possess this testimony, and is not made a partaker of the Divine nature, (2 Pet. 1:4) and does not struggle to attain to exaltation, is turning away and falling into darkness. It is strange to me that persons who have been many years in this Church, who have borne their testimony of the truth of the work of God in the last days many times, should finally come to the conclusion that they have gone astray, and must go in some other direction. Why is this? It is simply because they have suffered the mists of darkness (1 Ne. 8:23) to overcome them; they have not lived up to the principles they have professed, and instead of advancing to be made partakers of the divine nature and overcome the wiles that are in the world through lust, (2 Pet. 1:4) they suffer them to have dominion over them, and they fall back into darkness. When the storm of persecution surrounds us, then, of course, we are apt to be zealous, but when we are as it were left to ourselves we are tried in another way; and when the Lord commenced giving revelations to this

people he said to them, through his servant Joseph, that they should be tried in all things. (D&C 98:14) If there is any one thing that is calculated to try us more than another, that thing we may expect to encounter. I know this people will bear poverty and affliction, they will bear persecution, they will suffer their houses to be burned, their property to be destroyed, and sacrifice what the Lord has given them of earthly goods, expose themselves to suffering and hardship for the sake of the principles they have received, joyfully; but how many of these, when the smiles of Providence have beamed upon them, when prosperity has surrounded them, and they have been blessed and are in affluent circumstances, have forgotten the Lord, like the Prophet said of Jeshurun, "They waxed fat, and kicked, and forgot the Lord." (Deut. 32:15) Such is the fact with hundreds of Latter-day Saints. Now a man that expects to be exalted to thrones and dominions (D&C 132:19) must be just as good a Saint when he is surrounded with wealth, with the comforts and blessings of life in abundance, as he is, when he is in poverty—when being robbed of his possessions, and deprived of the means of subsistence; and the one condition is just as necessary to try some individuals as the other condition is to try any other.

From the time that I first became acquainted with the principles of this Church, I have watched the progress of the development of the Spirit of Prophecy among the Saints. I have never made pretensions to prophesy, though many things have been made manifest to me before they were fulfilled. I have foreseen many results which have been astonishing, in many instances, to others. The man that wishes to know the future let him study well the present, let him be careful that the present is all right; that the principles which he professes are not abused; that he lives up to the doctrines which he has received, and that he maintains his integrity towards his fellow beings as God requires at his hands; let him do this, and the future will be unfolded to him, and he will be prepared for it just as fast as necessary.

As Elder Middlemas said, he knew some things that were manifested to him, and knew how it would be beforehand. There are hundreds that can foresee by the Spirit of the Almighty, the Spirit of Prophecy, things that are to come to pass, without being able to know the precise manner how it will be effected. But I can tell you from the day of Joseph Smith's first commencement to testify of the things of God unto the present, that the very results that have been predicted have come to pass, but the manner has seldom been understood until it came.

("The Privilege of the Saints, Etc." *Journal of Discourses,* Volume 10, Discourse 16, p. 66)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

No Salvation Without Revelation

Salvation cannot come without revelation; it is in vain for anyone to minister without it. No man is a minister of Jesus Christ without being a Prophet. No man can be a minister of Jesus Christ except he has the testimony of Jesus; and this is the spirit of prophecy. Whenever salvation has been administered, it has been by testimony. Men of the present time testify of heaven and hell, and have never seen either; and I will say that no man knows these things without this.

Signs of Second Coming Have Commenced

Men profess to prophesy. I will prophesy that the signs of the coming of the Son of Man are already commenced. One pestilence will desolate after another. We shall soon have war and bloodshed. The moon will be turned to blood. I testify of these things, and that the coming of the Son of Man is nigh, even at your doors. If our souls and our bodies are not looking forth for the coming of the Son of Man; and after we are dead, if we are not looking forth, we shall be among those who are calling for the rocks to fall upon them.

Hearts of Children Turn to Fathers

The hearts of the children of men will have to be turned to the fathers, and the fathers to the children, living or dead, to prepare them for the coming of the Son of Man. If Elijah did not come, the whole earth would be smitten.

There will be here and there a Stake [of Zion] for the gathering of the Saints. Some may have cried peace, but the Saints and the world will have little peace from henceforth. Let this not hinder us from going to the Stakes; for God has told us to flee, not dallying, or we shall be scattered, one here, and another there. There your children shall be blessed, and you in the midst of friends where you may be blessed. The Gospel net gathers of every kind.

I prophesy, that that man who tarries after he has an opportunity of going, will be afflicted by the devil. Wars are at hand; we must not delay; but are not required to sacrifice. We ought to have the building up of Zion as our greatest object. When wars come, we shall have to flee to Zion. The cry is to make haste. The last revelation says, Ye shall not have time to have gone over the earth, until these things come. It will come as did the cholera, war, fires, and earthquakes; one pestilence after another, until the Ancient of Days comes, then judgment will be given to the Saints.

No Peace But in Zion

Whatever you may hear about me or Kirtland, take no notice of it; for if it be a place of refuge, the devil will use his greatest efforts to trap the Saints. You must make yourselves acquainted with those men who like Daniel pray three times a day toward the House of the Lord. Look to the Presidency and receive instruction. Every man who is afraid, covetous, will be taken in a snare. The time is soon coming, when no man will have any peace but in Zion and her stakes.

I saw men hunting the lives of their own sons, and brother murdering brother, women killing their own daughters, and daughters seeking the lives of their mothers. I saw armies arrayed against armies. I saw blood, desolation, fires. The Son of Man has said that the mother shall be against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother. These things are at our doors. They will follow the Saints of God from city to city. Satan will rage, and the spirit of the devil is now enraged. I know not how soon these things will take place; but with a view of them, shall I cry peace? No; I will lift up my voice and testify of them. How long you will have good crops, and the famine be kept off, I do not know; when the fig tree leaves, know then that the summer is nigh at hand.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 160–161)

**Joseph Smith Jr.** (Recorded Dream)

I was surrounded by my friends, and while looking at this harbor I saw a steamboat approaching the harbor. There were bridges on the pier for persons to cross, and there came up a wind and drove the steamboat under one of the bridges and upset it. I ran up to the boat, expecting the persons would all drown; and wishing to do something to assist them, I put my hand against the side of the boat, and with one surge I shoved it under the bridge and righted it up, and then told them to take care of themselves. But it was not long before I saw them starting out into the channel or main body of the water again. The storms were raging and the waters rough. I said to my friends that if they did not understand the signs of the times and the spirit of prophecy, they would be apt to be lost. It was but a few moments after when we saw the waves break over the boat, and she soon foundered and went down with all on board. ...

(*History of the Church,* 6:194–95).

## Points of Reference

There are two types of people inside and outside the church when it comes to understanding last day timelines and events. The first group of people list a bunch of random events—these events could be astro-

nomical, geological, random dates that add up to something "special," the general state of countries and the world, etc., etc.—and then pivot to vaguely saying, "the end is near." What do they mean by "the end"? What do they mean when they say "the Lord's second coming"? Your guess is as good as mine, because they never explain it. They basically just try to lay out a case for "being in the last days" and then use that to pivot to "an unknown series of events that give birth to a singular event of the Lord's second coming." If I could represent this in a visual, the visual would be:

Here's a group of random events → The second coming is near

If this is you, if you are still trying to figure out whether or not we are in the last days, I don't mean to be offensive, but Moroni explained that to Joseph Smith before he even gave him the plates! This should be a given to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints! After reading "Section One: A Sense of Urgency," this should only be more clear to you!

We are commanded to study the signs of the times ***in order to judge the seasons.*** You are supposed to look outside and see frost on the lawn, and because you see that, you know that fall is near. Once you see the leaves change color, you know that you are in fall. Once you see the leaves start falling from the trees, you know that winter is near. Once snow covers the ground, you know that you are in winter. Once the snow starts melting, you know that spring is near, etc., etc.

When you step back and look at all the information you have, you know all the seasons that will transpire before the end of the year (Spring → Summer → Fall → Winter). You know what signs to look for as transitional signs between seasons, and you also know what signs to look for to know that you are in a specific season. ***That*** is what we are supposed to do. But that is not what some are doing. Some list a bunch of events that happen during the day and then say night will shortly be upon us—thanks Sherlock, none us realized that the sun is going to set! What we really want to know is what's going to happen directly before and after the sun sets! We all know that the sun rises and the sun sets and we are in the period of sunlight. What's going to happen next is the question.

The reason why some teach like this, and the reason why some act like this, is because their motivation is to ramp fear up, i.e., "Look at all of these things, night will surely be upon us!" and they capstone this with, "And when the night comes, creatures of the night are going to kill most of you. In fact, a well-known prestigious scholar that I will now quote says that only a tenth of a tenth of people will survive the night!" People will then clamor around these individuals and will cry, "Tell us more! Take our money, take our subscriptions, take our likes! But please tell us more. Tell us how to avoid these things because we don't want to die!" They then can't give you anything else, or refuse to give you anything else, because they want to keep you in a state of fear and dependence. The Catholic church did this for many years. The Book of Mormon warns that this practice (ironically) known as priestcraft, will crop up even among the Saints in the last days. It's ironic because whether they realize it or not, they are a sign of the times.

So, how does one go about this the right way? What is the second group?

The second group does as the Lord commands, studying the signs and seasons as I described above. Using the example above, what is the very first thing that you need to learn? You need to learn the seasons. You need to know what is winter, what is spring, you need to know what fall is, and finally you need to know what summer is. So when the Lord says, "his face shall be unveiled" or "I will appear in the clouds and those on earth will be caught up to meet me" or "the seas will boil and all flesh will be consumed," etc., etc., you need to know that all of those describe the Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord. It would be like saying, "the frost will nip at your nose" or "the snow will be piled high" or "the days will be shorter," etc., etc. If you know what winter is, you will know that this is all describing one event, one season. You wouldn't know that unless you ***knew the season.*** So ***before you can even attempt*** to understand last days timelines you should be able to, for example, explain the difference between the Lord's coming to Mount Zion, the Lord's coming to the Mount of Olives, and finally the Lord's coming to the world. If you don't know what I'm talking about, if you don't know the difference, it would be like not knowing the difference between snow on the ground, a rainbow after a shower, and leaves changing color. If an individual couldn't tell the difference between those things, would you trust them explaining how the seasons of the world work and the signs of their transition? God forbid! Before you can begin, you have to learn these definitions. ***You have to learn them!*** Once you know these definitions, then you can start pinpointing signs of transition, i.e., things to look for as signs of moving between two different seasons. These are called *points of reference.* For example, somebody might say, "the temperature has to drop and then it will snow." This is a point of reference. We know because of this statement that a) the temperature had to be high(er), b) the temperature gets colder, and then c) it can now snow. These, once again, are *points of reference.*

## Ten Things That Will Greatly Help Understanding

We understand what we should be reading and spending our time on. We understand we have to understand the "seasons" so as to best create points of reference, etc. What are some general knowledge points that will help us greatly as we go about this? What are ten things that, if we know, will help us understand our reading better? What are some of the largest pitfalls I've personally seen as people fail to grasp or understand "seasons"? (References for these will be provided in subsequent chapters in depth.)

1. *Sea of glass, paradisaical glory, earth as Urim and Thummin, celestial kingdom, new heaven and new earth*—all of these refer to the earth being changed and brought back into the presence of God. If you read any of these keywords, mentally understand the timeframe they are talking about. The earth was in this state before the fall of Adam and Eve and will be progressively rolled back in the presence of God post the Great and Dreadful day of the Lord.
2. *Calling and election made sure, sealing in their foreheads, Church of the Firstborn, the book of the Lamb, fullness of charity, celestial marriage, sons and daughters to Christ, election of grace, the more sure word of prophecy, sealing of exaltation, the Second Comforter*—all of these refer to a series of events in which individuals and then couples have their ordinances sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise and then eventually have the risen Lord appear to them to be sealed by Him into the Heavenly Patriarchal Order.
3. *The remnant, lost ten tribes, those from the north country*—all these refer to the 10 tribes as a body that were led away and hidden by the Lord.
4. *Baurak Ale, my servant, Joseph Smith, Gazelam, One Like Moses, One Mighty and Strong*—all names for the prophet Joseph Smith.
5. *1,260 days, 3.5 years, time times and the diving of times*—all different ways of saying 3.5 years. Could be literal depending on the context, but also could just mean "a specified amount of time."
6. *144,000*—this will be the new subset of leadership in the Church of the Firstborn. We currently have The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and missionaries; when the Kingdom of God is established and the ten tribes return, 12,000 from each of the tribes will be selected. Resurrected and translated persons will obviously be among the initial group. This group, just like with all callings, might change over the course of the millennium. These 144,000 will be sent out prior to the Great and Dreadful Day, one last time to gather what is left of the elect of God as "hunters and fishers" (Jer. 16: 16), after the events of New Jerusalem.

7. *New Jerusalem, Zion, Mount Zion, Jackson County Missouri*—all the same location. Will be started to be built primarily by Ephraim after the Redemption of Zion, but will be finished with the return of the ten tribes.
8. *Adam-ondi-Ahman*—a place nearby the New Jerusalem (i.e., Jackson County) where multiple meetings involving high ranking members of Christ's past and present church will meet. Adam will eventually be part of the final meeting where Christ will be crowned King of king and Lord of lords and that all nations should serve him.
9. The Lord's multiple appearances: *appearing suddenly to His temple* vs. *placing His foot on the Mount of Olives* vs. *the veil is removed and the Earth rolled as a scroll, His face revealed, the city of Enoch comes down and the righteous are caught up, etc.*— these are three different events taking place in three different locations (America, Israel, and the world). A lot of things, and in some cases years, transpire between them. These are not a singular event or even a singular time frame (e.g., "one year").
10. *There are multiple resurrections in the morning of the first resurrection.* People will be resurrected at Adam-ondi-Ahman, at the Mount of Olives, at the Great and Dreadful Day, etc., etc. There is not a singular one-time resurrection for the just. This confusion arose from members' patriarchal blessings that promise them vaguely that "after they die, they will come forth in the morning of the first resurrection." Members then believe this refers to a single event. Most of the time they are thinking the resurrection at the great and dreadful day. This, however, isn't the first resurrection and won't even be the first resurrection of this last dispensation. To be resurrected "in the morning of the first resurrection" simply means to be resurrected in the time frame of all the Celestial beings. Reading about a "resurrection event" tied to the just is not enough to pinpoint it to a specific event, as resurrections have continued in the morning of the first resurrection since Christ's resurrection and will continue until the morning of the first resurrection ends.

## Examples of Points of Reference

Now that you have the definitions under your belt, you understand the doctrine—you know the "seasons"—you can now start to take notes on points of reference. Let me provide some important points of reference so that we can a) see how it is done in practice and b) learn some very basic yet important points of reference.

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

> **24** And this I have told you concerning Jerusalem; and when that day shall come, shall a remnant be scattered among all nations;
>
> **25** But they shall be gathered again; but they shall remain until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

**Elder Parley P. Pratt**

> "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and they shall be led away captive among all nations: and Jerusalem"—what will become of it finally?—"shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until"—that is a big word, and means much in the position it occupies here—"UNTIL"—on that word is suspended that nation's fate, and the fate of all the neighboring nations—"Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21:24)
>
> I tell you there is meaning in these words, contained in that single line. O ye nations of the earth, if I had the voice of an angel's trump, (Alma 29:1) that I could be heard to earth's remotest bounds, by kings, rulers, captains, generals, armies, and nations, I would wish to read that one line in their ears, and tell them the things that are summed up in it.
>
> "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21:24) What is meant by it? One thing we know certain, we have no need to conjecture, that is, that all these things happened literally... One million and a half perished! They fell by the edge of the sword, by pestilence, and by famine, and the remnants of the Jews were carried captive among all nations. To remain how long? As I have said, we know this prophecy has been literally fulfilled, for we see them scattered among all nations to this day... A great portion of that nation fell by the edge of the sword, and the residue went captive among all nations, and their city has been trodden under foot of the Gentiles, and will be until their times are fulfilled.."
>
> ("Literal Fulfillment of Prophecy, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses,* Volume 3, Discourse 19, p. 127)

Jerusalem trodden down → Times of the Gentiles fulfilled → Jews return to Jerusalem

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

> **30** And in that generation shall ***the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.***
>
> **31** And there shall be men standing in that generation, that shall not pass until they shall see an overflowing scourge; for ***a desolating sickness shall cover the land.***

Time of the Gentiles fulfilled → Desolating sickness covers the land

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

> **30** And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.
>
> **31** And there shall be men standing in that generation, that shall not pass until they shall see an overflowing scourge; ***for*** a desolating sickness shall cover the land.

**Synonyms For *for***

> as, as long as, because, being, considering, inasmuch as, now, since, whereas
>
> (Thesaurus.com, https://www.thesaurus.com/browse/for)

Desolating sickness → Overflowing scourge

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that ... ***the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed*** as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; ***pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land,*** to open and prepare the way ***for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country.*** The people of the Lord, those who have ***complied with the requirements of the new covenant, have already commenced gathering together to Zion, which is in the state of Missouri; therefore*** I declare unto you the warning which the Lord has commanded me to declare...
>
> ("Zion and Jerusalem," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 17)

Zion people complying with the new covenant in Zion, Jackson County Missouri → United States scene of bloodshed → pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake → Wicked swept from off the face of America → Ten tribes return from the north country

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> The Savior said when these tribulations should take place, it should be committed to a man who should be a witness over the whole world: the keys of knowledge, power and revelations should be revealed to a wit-

ness who should hold the testimony to the world. It has always been my province... Just at the time when some men think that I have no right to the keys of the Priesthood—just at that time I have the greatest right. ...

All the testimony is that the Lord in the last days would commit the keys of the Priesthood to a witness over all people. Has the Gospel of the kingdom commenced in the last days? And will God take it from the man until He takes him Himself? I have read it precisely as the words flowed from the lips of Jesus Christ. John the Revelator saw an angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth.

The scripture is ready to be fulfilled when great wars, famines, pestilence, great distress, judgments, &c., are ready to be poured out on the inhabitants of the earth. John saw the angel having the holy Priesthood, who should preach the everlasting Gospel to all nations. God had an angel—a special messenger—ordained and prepared for that purpose in the last days. Woe, woe be to that man or set of men who lift up their hands against God and His witness in these last days: for they shall deceive almost the very chosen ones!

("Interpretation of Scripture," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 364–365)

The Lord commits the keys of the Priesthood to Joseph Smith → The Gospel of the kingdom commenced in the last days → (wo)men/sets of (wo)men preach against Joseph Smith and his future role → they deceive almost the very elect of God → Angel flying through the midst of heaven (i.e. the witness) to preach to those on the earth → great wars, famines, pestilence, great distress, judgements, etc.

**3 Nephi 21**

**12** ***And my people who are a remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, yea, in the midst of them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he go through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.***

**13** Their hand shall be lifted up upon their adversaries, and all their enemies shall be cut off.

**14** Yea, wo be unto the Gentiles except they repent; for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Father, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots;

**15** And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strongholds;

**16** And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thy land, and thou shalt have no more soothsayers;

**17** Thy graven images I will also cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee, and thou shalt no more worship the works of thy hands;

**18** And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee; so will I destroy thy cities.

**19** And it shall come to pass that all lyings, and deceivings, and envyings, and strifes, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, shall be done away.

**20** For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel;

**21** And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.

**22** But if they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance;

**23** ***And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.***

**24** And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem.

**25** And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; ***and I also will be in the midst.***

**26** And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, ***yea, even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 133**

**25** And ***the Lord, even the Savior, shall stand in the midst of his people,*** and shall reign over all flesh.

**26** ***And they who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord;*** and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves; and they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence.

**27** And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep.

**28** Their enemies shall become a prey unto them,

**29** And in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water; and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land.

**30** And they shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim, my servants.

**31** And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence.

**32** And there shall they fall down and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim.

**33** And they shall be filled with songs of everlasting joy.

**34** Behold, this is the blessing of the everlasting God upon the tribes of Israel, and the richer blessing upon the head of Ephraim and his fellows.

The remnant of Jacob/ redemption of Zion → Building of New Jerusalem → Jesus in the midst of New Jerusalem → the work with the ten tribes shall commence → the ten tribes come to Zion and are crowned by Ephraim

**Revelation 7**

**1** And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

**2** And I saw ***another angel ascending from the east,*** having the seal of the living God: and I heard him cry with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

**3** Saying, ***Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.***

**4** And the number of them who were sealed were an hundred and forty and four thousand ***of all the tribes of the children of Israel.***

**5-8** Of the tribe of Juda, Reuben, Gad, Ase, Nepthalim, Manasses, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zabulon, Joseph, and Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

**9** After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

**10** And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

**11** And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

**12** Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

**13** And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

**14** And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, ***These are they which came out of great tribulation,*** and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

**15** Therefore are they before the throne of God, ***and serve him day and night in his temple:*** and he that sitteth on the throne ***shall dwell among them.***

**16** They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

**17** ***For the Lamb which is in the midst*** of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Angel flying through the midst of heaven (i.e. the witness) to preach to those on the earth says to delay the great wars, famines, pestilence, great distress, judgements, etc. until the servants are sealed in their heads → Jesus in the midst of New Jerusalem → the ten tribes are in Zion and are crowned by Ephraim → praising the Lord surrounding His throne

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

**92** And ***angels shall fly through the midst of heaven,*** crying with a loud voice, sounding the trump of God, saying: Prepare ye, prepare ye, O inhabitants of the earth; for the judgment of our God is come. Behold, and lo, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

**93** And immediately there shall appear a [a]great sign in heaven, and all people shall see it together.

**Footnote 93a great sign**

Matt. 24:30; Luke 21:25 (25–27). TG Signs.

**Matthew 24:30**

**30** And then shall ***appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven:*** and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn...

**95** And there shall be ***silence in heaven for the space of half an hour***

**Revelation 8**

**1** And when he had ***opened the seventh seal,*** there was ***silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.***

Angel flying through the midst of heaven (i.e. the witness) to preach to those on the earth → Sign of the Son of Man → Opening of 7th seal in heaven → silence in heaven for the space of half an hour

**Elder Parley P. Pratt**

From [these scriptures in Psalms 102] we learn—First, that there is ***a set time to build up Zion,*** or the city of which Isaiah speaks, namely, just before the second coming of Christ; ***and that when this city is built, the Lord will appear in His glory,*** and not before. So from this we affirm, that if such a city is never built, then the Lord will never come. Second, we learn that the people and kingdoms are to be gathered together, to serve the Lord, both in Zion and Jerusalem; and third, that this Psalm was written expressly ***for the generation to come, and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord, when they read it and see it fulfilled."***

(*A Voice of Warning,* p. 79)

The generation in which the times of the Gentiles is fulfilled → New Jerusalem built → Jesus in the midst → praising the Lord surrounding His throne

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

In the last days, ***God was to call a remnant,*** in which was to be deliverance, as well as in Jerusalem and Zion. Now if God should give no more revelations, where will we find Zion and this remnant? The time is near when desolation is to cover the earth, and then God will have a place of deliverance in his remnant, and in Zion... For without Zion, and a place of deliverance, we must fall; because the time is near when the sun will be darkened, and the moon turn to blood, and the stars fall from the heaven, and the earth reel to and fro. Then, if this is the case, and ***if we are not sanctified*** and gathered to the places God has appointed, with all our former professions and our great love for the Bible, we must fall; we cannot stand; we cannot be saved; for ***God will gather out his Saints from the Gentiles, and then comes desolation and destruction,*** and none can escape except the pure in heart who are gathered.

("Importance of Revelation," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 70–71)

**Doctrine and Covenants 105**

**35** There has been a day of calling, but the time has come for a day of choosing; and let those be chosen that are worthy.

**36** And it shall be manifest unto my servant, by the voice of the Spirit, those that are chosen; ***and they shall be sanctified;***

**37** And ***inasmuch as they follow the counsel which they receive,*** they shall have power after many days to ***accomplish all things pertaining to Zion.***

Days of calling → Days of choosing → Sanctification of the chosen by following the counsel from the keys → The remnant of Jacob/redemption of Zion → building of New Jerusalem and gathering in and unto it → great wars, famines, pestilence, great distress, judgements, etc.

## Try the Fruit; Know of Yourself

I am confident that when you compile quotes from the Pyramid of Truth and make your points of reference that you will arrive at the same series of events as everyone else who is filled with the Spirit of Prophesy and Revelation have. If you have the desire, the faith, and worthiness you could compile the rest of this book, The Macro Last-day Timeline, yourself. It really is as simple as that—understanding prophesy.

**Elder Parley P. Pratt**

The Lord will never come until he has organized his kingdom on the earth, and prepared his people by sending a messenger to prepare the way before him; (D&C 45:9) that messenger has come, and the man that delivered it has been slain, namely, Joseph Smith...

If the people had read the Scriptures they would [be] looking [and see]... if they had not listened to a set of blind guides, (Matt. 23:24) who have hired out for money to tell them the Scriptures mean something else.

("Literal Fulfillment of Prophecy, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses,* Volume 3, Discourse 19, p. 127)

# The Why, The Key: Priestcraft

*"And my vineyard has become corrupted every whit; and there is none which doeth good save it be a few; and they err in many instances because of priestcrafts, all having corrupt minds."*

*– Doctrine and Covenants 33:4*

## Introduction

### I. The Pyramid of Truth

There is a reason why that chapter comes before this chapter in The Macro Last Day Timeline—if you don't understand the pyramid of truth, you won't be able to build your doctrinal understanding of anything on sure ground, including the topic of this chapter. If you don't understand the difference between doctrine and policy, you frankly shouldn't be diving into any doctrinal topic ever—like ever. If you don't understand that difference, there is absolutely no way that you could build a correct functioning definition of any doctrinal term, let alone build anything that can withstand the winds and the rain. We must build upon the rock.

**President Harold B. Lee**

> It is not to be thought that every word spoken by the General Authorities is inspired, or that they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost in everything they read and write. Now you keep that in mind. I don't care what his position is, if he writes something or speaks something that goes beyond anything that you can find in the standard church works... you may immediately say, "Well, that is his own idea." And if he says something that contradicts what is found in the standard church works (I think that is why we call them "standard"–it is the standard measure of all that men teach), you may know by the same token that it is false, regardless of the position of the man who says it.
>
> ("The Place of the Living Prophet, Seer and Revelator," address to Seminaries and Institutes of Religion Personnel, BYU, 8 July 1964, p. 14; Church CES Manual, *Living Prophets For A Living Church,* 1974, p. 66)

**Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, John E. Page, Wilford Woodruff, John Taylor, and George A. Smith**

> We would say to the elders, that God has called you to an important office, he has laid upon you an onerous duty, he has called you to an holy calling, even to be the priests of the "most high God," messengers to the nations of the earth; ***an upon your diligence, your perseverance and faithfulness, the soundness of the doctrines that you preach, the moral precepts that you advance and practice, and upon the sound principles that you inculcate, hang the destinies of the human family, while you hold that priesthood.***
>
> You are the men that God has called spread forth his kingdom, he has committed the care of souls to your charge, and when you received this priesthood, you became the legate of heaven, and the great God demands it of you, that you should be faithful, and inasmuch as you are not, you will not be chosen; but it will be said unto you, stand by, and let a more honorable man than thou art take they place, and receive thy crown; ***be careful that you teach not for the word of God, the commandments of men, nor the doctrines of men, nor the ordinances of men, inasmuch as you are God's messengers; study the word of God and preach it, and not your opinions, for no man's opinion is worth a straw: advance no principle but what you can prove, for one scriptural proof is worth ten thousand opinions:*** we would moreover say, abide by that revelation which says, "preach nothing but repentance to this generation," and leave the further mysteries of the kingdom, till God shall tell you to preach them, which is not now.
>
> The horns of the beasts, the toes of the image, the frogs and the beast mentioned by John, are not going to save this generation, for if a man does not become acquainted with the first principles of the gospel, how shall he understand those greater mysteries, which the most wise cannot understand without revelation. These things therefore, have nothing to do with your mission.
>
> (*Times and Seasons,* 11 [November 1839]: 13)

This bit of information is crucial to understanding every doctrinal subject, for there will be many words, opinions, etc. shared on doctrinal subjects that are frankly not true. As **President Lee** said, "regardless of the position of the man who says it—if it doesn't square, it is false." With doctrine, things need to be consonant with that which is higher, or it is false. With policy and personal revelation, things received need to be consonant with that which is higher, or it is false. Since this is a doctrinal topic, we will be using that pyramid:

Jesus Christ > Dispensation Head (Joseph Smith Jr.) > Standard Works > Prophets and Apostles with Sustaining Vote

So, once again, if Apostle Joe says "the sky is orange!" and we can point to the standard works which say "the sky is blue!" what do we do? Do we try and make it fit? No. We set it aside as false and move on. If Apostle Pete says "butterflies come from rainbows" and we cannot find anything in the standard works, the words of Joseph Smith, or the Doctrine and Covenants (Jesus Christ) to validate said claim, we likewise throw it out as simply that Apostle's opinion.

Once again, this becomes crucial, because if you are relying entirely on Apostles and modern Prophets to teach you doctrine while you have no functioning understanding of the standard works, the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, or the Lord's personal teachings (i.e., the Doctrine and Covenants), your understanding will be limited and you will not have the distinguishing understanding to know what is doctrine, what is opinion, and what may yet be simply false. This is why, when we build doctrinal understanding, we start with the words of Christ (if there are any), the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the Standard Works, ***and then*** augment that with a concert of clarity from modern Apostles and Prophets—***not*** the other way around. What is provided in this chapter will be just that, so if you happen to find some quote somewhere from some Apostle that contradicts, it will be rightly set aside as their opinion which is false. This is not a statement confirming that such quotes exist; this is simply a statement once again confirming President Lee's quote above.

### II. Whatever God Requires is Right

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it; and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God. But we cannot keep all the commandments without first knowing them, and we cannot expect to know all, or more than we now know unless we comply with or keep those we have already received. ***That which is wrong under one circumstance, may be, and often is, right under another.***
>
> God said, "Thou shalt not kill;" at another time He said, "Thou shalt utterly destroy." This is the principle on which the government of heaven is conducted—by revelation adapted to the circumstances in which the children of the kingdom are placed. ***Whatever God requires is right,***

> ***no matter what it is,*** although we may not see the reason thereof till long after the events transpire. If we seek first the kingdom of God, all good things will be added. So with Solomon: first he asked wisdom, and God gave it him, and with it every desire of his heart, even things which might be considered abominable to all who understand the order of heaven only in part, ***but which in reality were right because God gave and sanctioned by special revelation.***
>
> ("Happiness the Design of Existence," *TPJS,* pp. 255–256)

Now that we've covered the doctrinal side of the equation, let's skip over to the policy side of the equation. What is the Lord's command regarding killing? "Thou shalt not kill." Would anyone argue that point? God forbid. But what about:

**Deuteronomy 7**

> **1** When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;
>
> **2** And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee; ***thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:***
>
> **3** Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.
>
> **4** For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.
>
> **5** But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.
>
> **6** For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

If the Lord's command is "thou shalt not kill," then what about these people whom the Lord commanded to utterly destroy another group of people? In some cases, down to the man, woman, child, and even the animals! Were these people in error? Were they "sinning" by obeying the Lord's mouthpiece and slaying those people? Once again, God forbid! As Joseph Smith taught, that which is wrong under one circumstance may be, and often is, right under another when God sanctions by special revelation through the keys, i.e., "policy." When something is sanctioned by special revelation through the keys, i.e., "policy," obedience to that command is right, regardless of what the command is—even things that "might be considered abominable to all who understand the order of heaven" (*TPJS,* p. 256).

## III. The "But They're Doing it!" Fallacy

That army of Israelites just slaughtered that wicked group of people, down to the man, woman, and child—that means I can kill wicked groups of people down to the man, woman, and child too, right? And if you disagree with that, then you are in a state of apostasy, because look! The Israelite army and leaders of the church are doing it!

Hopefully everyone can see how absolutely ludicrous such a statement is, how absolutely ungrounded, braindead, and faulty that logic is. Yes, there are cases in which the keys, by special revelation, sanction certain behavior that otherwise would be considered gross sin! That is true! But only for those people in those specific cases in which the keys have stipulated! Just because the keys spoke and said that Israelite army was to "utterly destroy," does not mean that I can also "utterly destroy" and it is no longer a sin. No. The general command of "thou shalt not kill" still very much applies to me unless a special stipulation is given to me by the keys!

So when we see Apostles doing things by special command or giving special exemptions to specific individuals, etc., that does not mean that this special exemption now applies broadly to the world or to the church.

Further, are Apostles and Prophets perfect? No. Can an Apostle or Prophet swear, for example? I'm sure it has happened. Now, if I hear an Apostle or Prophet swear, can I then point to that behavior and say, "Well, look! A Prophet or Apostle just swore! That means swearing isn't in fact a sin!" No. Such a claim would be utterly ridiculous to the intelligent mind!

So, just because groups of people are given special exemptions by the keys, that does not mean those exemptions apply to you, and just because you see an Apostle or Prophet do something, that does not mean the act is not in fact a "sin." If a person does not obtain special sanction, it is still very much a sin, even though an Apostle or Prophet did it. They are human like the rest of us.

## The Prophetic Picture

The first thing all members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints need to wrestle with is figuring out:

1. Is the Book of Mormon true? Do I really believe that the Book of Mormon is true?
2. Did Nephi, Mormon, Moroni, etc. really see my day? Do I really believe that?
3. Was the majority of these men's work directed for the benefit of Saints or non-Saints? Do I believe that?

I personally know that the Book of Mormon is true. I know that with a testimony born from the Holy Ghost. I know that these special, gifted prophets were "shown us"; they knew our righteousness and they knew our sins. I also know that this book, which is the keystone to our religion, was written primarily ***for the Saints.*** The Saints were to be the ones digesting it; the Saints were to be the ones feasting upon its words; the Saints were to use it as a "guidebook," as our prophet recently said. But, every member has to cement this understanding ***in their own hearts and in their own minds.*** We have to truly "hear Him"—for the Lord is holding the entire Church under condemnation for not doing just that:

**Doctrine and Covenants 84**

> **49** And the whole world lieth in sin, and groaneth under darkness and under the bondage of sin.
>
> **50** And by this you may know they are under the bondage of sin, because they come not unto me.
>
> **51** For whoso cometh not unto me is under the bondage of sin.
>
> **52** And whoso receiveth not my voice is not acquainted with my voice, and is not of me.
>
> **53** And by this you may know the righteous from the wicked, and that the whole world groaneth under sin and darkness even now.
>
> **54** And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and ***because you have treated lightly the things you have received***—
>
> **55** Which vanity and unbelief have brought ***the whole church under condemnation.***
>
> **56** And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all.
>
> **57** And they shall remain under this condemnation ***until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon*** and the

former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written—

**58** That they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom; otherwise there remaineth a scourge and judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion.

Every member has to do this because the natural man rationalizes away sin, and the easiest way to rationalize away sin is to point at those on the "outside" and say "they did it!" The natural man is an enemy to God. Nephi taught that the wicked "[take] the truth to be hard" (1 Ne. 16:2). It makes them hostile because they have no intention of getting better, they have no intent to use the Book of Mormon as an actual guidebook for themselves—they simply use it as a way to judge others outside the church.

If we are using the Book of Mormon as a guidebook for our life and we have a testimony of its authenticity and foreknowledge of its writers and its target audience, any sane, rational man of common intelligence or above is then left to conclude that the warnings in said book, written to us, the Saints, are the things that are going to be the problems for Saints leading up to the second coming of the Savior.

But, if these men, these prophets of God, actually saw us, actually saw the problems that would be arising ***in the ranks of the Saints,*** being taught these things would become a painful process for a lot of members. Because of this, many members begin the process of rationalization and self-justification, almost always starting that process by moving from quantifiable realties to qualitative realities—moving things that can easily and readily be judged into a perceived gray area. Once this rationalization has taken place, once we have gone hand in hand with Babylon as Brigham Young said we would, we reach the condition President Heber C. Kimball warned of.

## The Great Sieve

**Elder Heber C. Kimball**

[For] the time is coming when we will be mixed up in these now peaceful valleys to that extent that it will be difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God. Then, brethren, look out for the great sieve, for there will be ***a great sifting time,*** and many will fall; for I say unto you there is a test, a Test, a TEST coming, and who will be able to stand? This church has before it many close places through which it must pass before the work of God is crowned with victory. To meet the difficulties that are coming it will be necessary for you to have knowledge of the truth of this work for yourselves. The difficulties will be of such character that the man or woman who does not possess this personal knowledge or witness will fall. If you have not got the testimony, live right and call upon the Lord and cease not 'till you obtain it. If you do not, you will not stand. ...

(May 1868, in *Deseret News,* 23 May 1931; see also *Conference Report,* Oct. 1930, p. 58–59; Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball,* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1945, p. 446, Smith, Robert W. and Elisabeth A., *Scriptural and Secular Prophecies Pertaining to The Last Days,* Ninth Edition, Pyramid Press, SLC, UT, 1947, pp. 134–138; *Deseret News,* May 23, 1931; W. Cleon Skousen, *Prophecy and Modern Times,* pp. 31–33, An Army of Elders, May 1868, Heber C. Kimball Reported by his son J. Golden Kimball, CR October 1930, p. 58. See also Prophetic Sayings of Heber C. Kimball to Sister Amanda H. Wilcox)

**President Nelson**

Lesson 1: The Home Is the Center of Faith and Worship

Often when the Lord warns us about the perils of the last days, He counsels thus: "Stand ye in holy places, and be not moved."[2] These "holy places" certainly include the Lord's temples and meetinghouses. But as our ability to gather in these places has been restricted in varying degrees, we have learned that one of the holiest of places on earth is the home—yes, even your home.

**Footnote 2**

Doctrine and Covenants 87:8; see also Matthew 24:15; Doctrine and Covenants 45:31–33; 101:21–22.

**Doctrine and Covenants 45:31–33**

**31** And there shall be men standing in that generation, that shall not pass until they shall see an overflowing scourge; for a desolating sickness shall cover the land.

**32** But my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die.

**33** And there shall be earthquakes also in divers places, and many desolations; yet men will harden their hearts against me, and they will take up the sword, one against another, and they will kill one another.

("What We are Learning and Will Never Forget," Gen. Conf., Apr. 2021)

"A great sifting time."

How does a sieve work? By pulling only one direction? Or does it work by shaking back and forth? As part of the self-justification we've already addressed, many view these tests almost entirely as a political "left vs. right" spectrum and assume that the sifting will simply be pulling in one direction. However, a sieve needs to go both directions to test whether people are acting based off of faith, obedience, etc. or purely political and self-interests. Very few passed or are passing both tests or directions. It's easy to pass one and not the other. It's all fun and games telling others we need to be obedient to things that already align with our political views and our own self-interests, but what about when we need to obedient to things that don't align with our political views or self-interest? Well, then all of the sudden, you have to start making some real choices.

The sieve will go back and forth, back and forth, and only those who have passed the test of obedience in all directions, will be able to abide a Celestial Law and receive exaltation.

But knowing that there will be a great sifting time doesn't explain *the why* of so many Saints' falling short, and it doesn't give us *the key* to be able to answer that question!

## The Key

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

I told the brethren that ***the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth,*** and the ***keystone of our religion,*** and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, ***than by any other book.***

(*History of the Church,* 4:461.)

**President Ezra Taft Benson**

We are to use the Book of Mormon in handling objections to the Church. God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ revealed themselves to Joseph Smith in a marvelous vision. After that glorious event, Joseph Smith told a minister about it. Joseph was surprised to hear the minister say that there were no such things as visions or revelations in these days, that all such things had ceased. (See JS—H 1:21.) This remark symbolizes practically all of the objections that have ever been made against the Church by nonmembers and dissident members alike. Namely, they do not believe that God reveals his will today to the Church through prophets of God. All objections, whether they be on abortion, plural marriage, seventh-day worship, etc., basically hinge on whether Joseph Smith and his successors were and are prophets of God receiving divine revelation. Here, then, is a procedure to handle most objections through the use of the Book of Mormon. First, understand the objection. Second,

give the answer from revelation. Third, show how the correctness of the answer really depends on whether or not we have modern revelation through modern prophets. Fourth, explain that whether or not we have modern prophets and revelation really depends on whether the Book of Mormon is true. Therefore, the only problem the objector has to resolve for himself is whether the Book of Mormon is true.

The Book of Mormon is to be used "for a standard unto my people, which are of the house of Israel," the Lord says, and its words "shall hiss forth unto the ends of the earth." (2 Ne. 29:2.) We, the members of the Church, and particularly the missionaries, have to be the "hissers," or the tellers and testifiers, of the Book of Mormon unto the ends of the earth. The Book of Mormon is the great standard we are to use. It shows that Joseph Smith was a prophet. It contains the words of Christ, and its great mission is to bring men to Christ, and all other things are secondary. ... ***It is a great sieve.***

(First Presidency message, The Book of Mormon is the Word of God)

Yes, The Book of Mormon holds the key yet again—not Daniel, or Esdras, or Visions of Glory, or any other book. The Book of Mormon is once again the key to understanding this *why* and being able to answer it. So why, *why* are so many Saints lost in this sieving time? Why are Saints who should know better lost in the mist of darkness? What is the cause?

## If the Past is Prologue

**2 Nephi 26**

**3** And after the Messiah shall come there shall be signs given unto my people of his birth, and also of his death and resurrection; and great and terrible shall that day be unto the wicked, for they shall perish; and they perish ***because they cast out the prophets,*** and the saints, and stone them, and slay them; wherefore the cry of the blood of the saints shall ascend up to God from the ground against them.

**4** Wherefore, all those who are proud, and that do wickedly, the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, for they shall be as stubble.

**5** And they that kill the prophets, and the saints, the depths of the earth shall swallow them up, saith the Lord of Hosts; and mountains shall cover them, and whirlwinds shall carry them away, and buildings shall fall upon them and crush them to pieces and grind them to powder.

**6** And they shall be visited with thunderings, and lightnings, and earthquakes, and all manner of destructions, for the fire of the anger of the Lord shall be kindled against them, and they shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall consume them, saith the Lord of Hosts.

So a basic rundown of the points of reference here is:

1. The people reject the prophets and the Saints, and they stone them and slay them
2. The blood of the Saints cries from the ground
3. The people are visited with thunders and lightnings and earthquakes, etc.

So what did this actually look like for the Nephites around 33 A.D., and what else was said about it?

**3 Nephi 9**

**1** And it came to pass that there was a voice heard among all the inhabitants of the earth, upon all the face of this land, crying:

**2** Wo, wo, wo unto this people; wo unto the inhabitants of the whole earth except they shall repent; for the devil laugheth, and his angels rejoice, because of the slain of the fair sons and daughters of my people; and it is ***because of their iniquity and abominations that they are fallen!***

**3** Behold, that great city Zarahemla have I burned with fire, and the inhabitants thereof.

**4** And behold, that great city Moroni have I caused to be sunk in the depths of the sea, and the inhabitants thereof to be drowned.

**5** And behold, that great city Moronihah have I covered with earth, and the inhabitants thereof, to hide their iniquities and their abominations from before my face, ***that the blood of the prophets and the saints shall not come any more unto me against them.***

**6** And behold, the city of Gilgal have I caused to be sunk, and the inhabitants thereof to be buried up in the depths of the earth;

**7** Yea, and the city of Onihah and the inhabitants thereof, and the city of Mocum and the inhabitants thereof, and the city of Jerusalem and the inhabitants thereof; and waters have I caused to come up in the stead thereof, to hide their wickedness and abominations from before my face, ***that the blood of the prophets and the saints shall not come up any more unto me against them.***

**8** And behold, the city of Gadiandi, and the city of Gadiomnah, and the city of Jacob, and the city of Gimgimno, all these have I caused to be sunk, and made hills and valleys in the places thereof; and the inhabitants thereof have I buried up in the depths of the earth, to hide their wickedness and abominations from before my face, ***that the blood of the prophets and the saints should not come up any more unto me against them.***

**9** And behold, that great city Jacobugath, which was inhabited by the people of king Jacob, have I caused to be burned with fire because of their sins and their wickedness, which was above all the wickedness of the whole earth, because of their secret murders and combinations; for it was they that did destroy the peace of my people and the government of the land; therefore I did cause them to be burned, to destroy them from before my face, ***that the blood of the prophets and the saints should not come up unto me any more against them.***

**10** And behold, the city of Laman, and the city of Josh, and the city of Gad, and the city of Kishkumen, have I caused to be burned with fire, and the inhabitants thereof, ***because of their wickedness in casting out the prophets, and stoning those whom I did send to declare unto them concerning their wickedness and their abominations.***

**11** ***And because they did cast them all out, that there were none righteous among them, I did send down fire and destroy them, that their wickedness and abominations might be hid from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints whom I sent among them might not cry unto me from the ground against them.***

So as one can see, Nephi's prophesy, what he saw, played out literally in its fulfillment. And what about the parallel to our day? Is the past truly prologue?

**Revelation 6**

**9** And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

**10** And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, ***dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?***

So here we have the blood of the Saints crying from the ground, then continuing we read:

**Revelation 6**

**12** And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

> **13** And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.
>
> **14** And the heavens opened as a scroll is opened when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

> **87** For not many days hence and the earth shall tremble and reel to and fro as a drunken man; and the sun shall hide his face, and shall refuse to give light; and the moon shall be bathed in blood; and the stars shall become exceedingly angry, and shall cast themselves down as a fig that falleth from off a fig tree.
>
> **88** And after your testimony cometh wrath and indignation upon the people.
>
> **89** For ***after your testimony cometh the testimony of earthquakes,*** that shall cause groanings in the midst of her, and men shall fall upon the ground and shall not be able to stand.
>
> **90** And also ***cometh the testimony of the voice of thunderings, and the voice of lightnings, and the voice of tempests, and the voice of the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds.***

Here we have that the people are visited with thunder, lightning, earthquakes, etc. ***after*** the testimonies and blood crying from the ground.

So we have clear parallels from when Jesus visited the Nephites to when Jesus will visit us in the Americas. Going back to 2 Nephi 26:

**2 Nephi 26**

> **7** O the pain, and the anguish of my soul for the loss of the slain of my people! For I, Nephi, have seen it, and it well nigh consumeth me before the presence of the Lord; but I must cry unto my God: Thy ways are just.
>
> **8** But behold, ***the righteous that hearken unto the words of the prophets, and destroy them not,*** but look forward unto Christ with steadfastness for the signs which are given, notwithstanding all persecution—behold, ***they are they which shall not perish.***
>
> **9** But the Son of Righteousness shall appear unto them; and he shall heal them, and they shall have peace with him…

Once again, the clear divide here is between those who follow the prophet vs. those who follow him not, further explaining and shedding light on the actual sieving process. However, we still need to answer the question, "***Why*** did they not heed the prophets? ***Why*** is this sieve so successful?!" Let's keep reading.

**2 Nephi 26**

> **10** And when [they have rejected the prophets] a speedy destruction cometh unto my people; for, notwithstanding the pains of my soul, I have seen it; wherefore, I know that it shall come to pass; and ***they sell themselves for naught;*** for, for the reward of their pride and their foolishness they shall reap destruction; for because they yield unto the devil and choose works of darkness rather than light, therefore they must go down to hell.
>
> **11** For the Spirit of the Lord will not always strive with man. And when the Spirit ceaseth to strive with man then cometh speedy destruction, and this grieveth my soul.

So what causes people to harden their hearts against the prophets, or in other words, to have the veil of unbelief fall upon them, or as Joseph Smith put it, "the veil of stupidity" come upon them, or as Nephi puts it, "to have the Lord's Light cease to strive with you"? We finally have our first clue: *Selling themselves for naught.*

When that happens, the Spirit of the Lord ceases to strive with people. A veil of unbelief, or stupidity, falls upon their minds, and "behold, ere, [they are] aware, [they are] left unto [themselves], to kick against the pricks, to persecute the saints, and to fight against God" (D&C 121:38).

**2 Nephi 26**

> **14** But behold, I prophesy unto you concerning the last days; concerning the days when the Lord God shall bring these things forth unto the children of men. …
>
> **19** And it shall come to pass, that those who have dwindled in unbelief shall be smitten [and scourged] by the hand of the Gentiles.

Nephi sees what happens to his people and then immediately relates it to us in the last days. The most important thing would be for him to try to get us not to dwindle in unbelief and reject the prophets during the sifting time that Nephi knows is coming. So, Nephi clarifies beyond any reasonable doubt what causes the unbelief, what causes the veil of stupidity, what causes the Light of Christ to no longer dwell with man, and ultimately what causes the rejection of the prophets—how they are "sell[ing] themselves for naught"—and he does so in the following verses.

## What is Priestcraft?

First I'd ask, "What is a craft?"

**Joseph Smith**

> I am like a huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain; and the only polishing I get is when some corner gets rubbed off by coming in contact with something else, striking with accelerated force against religious bigotry, ***priestcraft, lawyer-craft, doctor-craft, lying editors, suborned judges and jurors, and the authority of perjured executives,*** backed by mobs, blasphemers, licentious and corrupt men and women—all hell knocking off a corner here and a corner there. Thus I will become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty, who will give me dominion over all and every one of them, when their refuge of lies shall fail, and their hiding place shall be destroyed, while these smooth-polished stones with which I come in contact become marred.
>
> ("The Prophet's Characterization of Himself," *TPJS,* p. 304)

Priestcraft, lawyer-craft, doctor-craft, editors, judges… I could add to the list woodcraft, leathercraft, etc., etc., etc. What is someone's "craft"? Someone's "craft" is their particular skillset in which they "get gain." This is very different from service, giving "milk and honey, without money and without price" (2 Ne. 26:25), giving "free[ly] [to] all men" (2 Ne. 26:27), etc.

Gain is involved in all crafts—it is the very reason why people pursue the title "craftsman of [insert here]." As soon as gain is involved, it becomes a craft. It is no longer service. It is no longer charity. It has become "mammon" or "an exchange of goods," for mammon is simply the standard Hebrew word for ***any kind of financial dealing.*** So, as soon as there is any financial dealing or exchange, it becomes "mammon," it becomes "gain," it becomes a "craft" (Hugh Nibley, *Approaching Zion,* Chapter 2, p. 37).

But we have used enough words from Brother Hugh Nibley and myself. Let us turn to The Book of Mormon and read how it describes priestcraft and how it does not describe priestcraft.

**2 Nephi 26**

> **20** And the Gentiles are lifted up in the pride of their eyes, and have stumbled, because of the greatness of their stumbling block, ***that they have built up many churches; nevertheless, they put down the power and miracles of God, and preach up unto themselves their own wisdom and their own learning, that they may get gain and grind upon the face of the poor.***
>
> **21** ***And there are many churches built up [and I would add "and YouTube channels, and Facebook groups, and Come Follow Me programs, etc."] which cause envyings, and strifes, and malice.***

**22** And there are also secret combinations, even as in times of old, according to the combinations of the devil, for he is the founder of all these things; yea, the founder of murder, and works of darkness; yea, and he leadeth them by the neck with a flaxen cord, until he bindeth them with his strong cords forever. ...

**25** Behold, doth [the Lord] cry unto any, saying: Depart from me? Behold, I say unto you, Nay; but he saith: Come unto me all ye ends of the earth, ***buy milk and honey, without money and without price.***

**26** Behold, hath he commanded any that they should depart out of the synagogues, or out of the houses of worship? Behold, I say unto you, Nay.

**27** Hath he commanded any that they should not partake of his salvation? Behold I say unto you, Nay; but ***he hath given it free for all men;*** and he hath commanded his people that they should persuade all men to repentance.

**28** Behold, hath the Lord commanded any that they should not partake of his goodness? Behold I say unto you, Nay; but all men are privileged the one like unto the other, and none are forbidden.

**29** ***He commandeth that there shall be no priestcrafts; for, behold, priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion.***

***30 Behold, the Lord hath forbidden this thing; wherefore, the Lord God hath given a commandment that all men should have charity,*** which charity is love. And except they should have charity they were nothing. Wherefore, if they should have charity they would not suffer the laborer in Zion to perish.

**31** But ***the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish.***

**3 Nephi 13**

**19** ***Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth,*** where moth and rust doth corrupt, and thieves break through and steal;

**20** But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

**21** ***For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.***

**22** The light of the body is the eye; if, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

**23** ***But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!***

**24** No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. ***Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.***

**1 Nephi 22**

**23** For the time speedily shall come that all churches ***which are built up to get gain,*** and all those who are built up to get power over the flesh, and those who are built up to become popular in the eyes of the world, and those who seek the lusts of the flesh and the things of the world, and to do all manner of iniquity; yea, in fine, all those who belong to the kingdom of the devil are they who need fear, and tremble, and quake; they are those who must be brought low in the dust; they are those who must be consumed as stubble; and this is according to the words of the prophet.

**Alma 1**

**2** And it came to pass that in the first year of the reign of Alma in the judgment-seat, there was a man brought before him to be judged, a man who was large, and was noted for his much strength.

**3** And he had gone about among the people, preaching to them that which he termed to be the word of God, bearing down against the church; declaring unto the people that every priest and teacher ought to become popular; ***and they ought not to labor with their hands, but that they ought to be supported by the people.***

**4** And he also testified unto the people that all mankind should be saved at the last day, and that they need not fear nor tremble, but that they might lift up their heads and rejoice; for the Lord had created all men, and had also redeemed all men; and, in the end, all men should have eternal life.

**5** And it came to pass that he did teach these things so much that many did believe on his words, even so many ***that they began to support him and give him money.***

**6** And he began to be lifted up in the pride of his heart, ***and to wear very costly apparel,*** yea, and even began to establish a church after the manner of his preaching. ...

**12** But Alma said unto him: Behold, ***this is the first time that priestcraft has been introduced among this people. And behold, thou art not only guilty of priestcraft, but hast endeavored to enforce it by the sword; and were priestcraft to be enforced among this people it would prove their entire destruction.***

**16** Nevertheless, ***this did not put an end to the spreading of priestcraft through the land; for there were many who loved the vain things of the world,*** and they went forth preaching false doctrines; and this they did ***for the sake of riches and honor.***

**Helaman 7**

**18** It is because you have hardened your hearts; yea, ye will not hearken unto the voice of the good shepherd; yea, ye have provoked him to anger against you.

**19** And behold, instead of gathering you, except ye will repent, behold, he shall scatter you forth that ye shall become meat for dogs and wild beasts.

**20** O, how could you have forgotten your God in the very day that he has delivered you?

**21** But behold, ***it is to get gain, to be praised of men, yea, and that ye might get gold and silver. And ye have set your hearts upon the riches and the vain things of this world, for the which ye do murder, and plunder, and steal, and bear false witness against your neighbor, and do all manner of iniquity.***

**22** And for this cause wo shall come unto you except ye shall repent. For if ye will not repent, behold, this great city, and also all those great cities which are round about, which are in the land of our possession, shall be taken away that ye shall have no place in them; for behold, the Lord will not grant unto you strength, as he has hitherto done, to withstand against your enemies.

**3 Nephi 27**

**32** But behold, it sorroweth me because of the fourth generation from this generation, for they are led away captive by him even as ***was the son of perdition; for they will sell me for silver and for gold, and for that which moth doth corrupt and which thieves can break through and steal.*** And in that day will I visit them, even in turning their works upon their own heads.

## What is Gain?

**Doctrine and Covenants 42**

**54** Thou shalt not take thy brother's garment; ***thou shalt pay for that which thou shalt receive of thy brother.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 72**

**11** To take an account of the elders as before has been commanded; and to administer to their wants, ***who shall pay for that which they receive, inasmuch as they have wherewith to pay;***

The term *gain* refers to the increase in the value of an asset when it is sold. Put simply, a capital gain occurs when you sell an asset for more than what you originally paid for it. There is an "increase" or "gain" obtained.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Brethren, we are gathering to this beautiful land, to build up Zion. ... But since I have been here I perceive the spirit of selfishness, covetousness, exists in the hearts of the saints. ... Here are those who begin to spread out, buying up all the land they are able to do, ... thinking to lay foundations for themselves only, looking to their own individual familys. ... Now I want to tell you that Zion can not be built up in any such way. I see signs put out, Beer signs, speculative scheems are being introduced. This is the ways of the world—Babylon indeed, and I tell you in the name of the God of Israel, if there is not repentance, ... you will be broken up and scattered from this choice land.
>
> (Edward Stevenson, Life and History of Elder Edward Stevenson (n.d.), pp. 40–41; Hugh Nibley, *Approaching Zion,* pp. 347–348)

## Practical Examples from The Book of Mormon

Here are a few practical examples that are impossible to confuse or refute.

**Alma 1**

> **19** But it came to pass that whosoever did not belong to the church of God began to persecute those that did belong to the church of God, and had taken upon them the name of Christ.
>
> **20** Yea, they did persecute them, and afflict them with all manner of words, and this because of their humility; because they were not proud in their own eyes, and ***because they did impart the word of God, one with another, without money and without price.***
>
> **25** Now this was a great trial to those that did stand fast in the faith; nevertheless, they were steadfast and immovable in keeping the commandments of God, and they bore with patience the persecution which was heaped upon them.
>
> **26** ***And when the priests left their labor to impart the word of God unto the people, the people also left their labors to hear the word of God. And when the priest had imparted unto them the word of God they all returned again diligently unto their labors; and the priest, not esteeming himself above his hearers, for the preacher was no better than the hearer, neither was the teacher any better than the learner; and thus they were all equal, and they did all labor, every man according to his strength.***
>
> **27** And they did impart of their substance, every man according to that which he had, to the poor, and the needy, and the sick, and the afflicted; and they did not wear costly apparel, yet they were neat and comely.

**Alma 35**

> **3** And it came to pass that after the more popular part of the Zoramites had consulted together concerning the words which had been preached unto them, ***they were angry because of the word, for it did destroy their craft; therefore they would not hearken unto the words.***

**Alma 30**

> **12** And this Anti-Christ, whose name was Korihor, (and the law could have no hold upon him) began to preach unto the people ... And after this manner did he preach, saying: ...
>
> **27** ... [Y]e lead away this people after the foolish traditions of your fathers, and according to your own desires; and ye keep them down, even as it were in bondage, ***that ye may glut yourselves with the labors of their hands,*** that they durst not look up with boldness, and that they durst not enjoy their rights and privileges.
>
> **28** Yea, they durst not make use of that which is their own lest they should offend their priests, who do yoke them according to their desires, and have brought them to believe, by their traditions and their dreams and their whims and their visions and their pretended mysteries, that they should, if they did not do according to their words, offend some unknown being, who they say is God—a being who never has been seen or known, who never was nor ever will be ...
>
> **31** And he did rise up in great swelling words before Alma, and did revile against the priests and teachers, ***accusing them of leading away the people after the silly traditions of their fathers, for the sake of glutting on the labors of the people.***

**Alma 30**

> **32** Now Alma said unto him: ***Thou knowest that we do not glut ourselves upon the labors of this people; for behold I have labored even from the commencement of the reign of the judges until now, with mine own hands for my support, notwithstanding my many travels round about the land to declare the word of God unto my people.***
>
> **33** ***And notwithstanding the many labors which I have performed in the church, I have never received so much as even one senine for my labor; neither has any of my brethren, save it were in the judgment-seat; and then we have received only according to law for our time.***
>
> **34** ***And now, if we do not receive anything for our labors in the church,*** what doth it profit us to labor in the church save it were to declare the truth, that we may have rejoicings in the joy of our brethren?
>
> **35** ***Then why sayest thou that we preach unto this people to get gain, when thou, of thyself, knowest that we receive no gain?***

**Mosiah 18**

> **26** ***And the priests were not to depend upon the people for their support; but for their labor they were to receive the grace of God, that they might wax strong in the Spirit, having the knowledge of God, that they might teach with power and authority from God.***

**Mosiah 2**

> **9** And these are the words which he spake and caused to be written, saying: My brethren, all ye that have assembled yourselves together, you that can hear my words which I shall speak unto you this day; for I have not commanded you to come up hither to trifle with the words which I shall speak, but that you should hearken unto me, and open your ears that ye may hear, and your hearts that ye may understand, and your minds that the mysteries of God may be unfolded to your view.
>
> **10** I have not commanded you to come up hither that ye should fear me, or that ye should think that I of myself am more than a mortal man.
>
> **11** ***But I am like as yourselves,*** subject to all manner of infirmities in body and mind; yet I have been chosen by this people, and consecrated by my father, and was suffered by the hand of the Lord that I should be a ruler and a king over this people; and have been kept and preserved by his matchless power, to serve you with all the might, mind and strength which the Lord hath granted unto me.
>
> **12** ***I say unto you that as I have been suffered to spend my days in your service, even up to this time, and have not sought gold nor silver nor any manner of riches of you;***
>
> **13** Neither have I suffered that ye should be confined in dungeons, nor that ye should make slaves one of another, nor that ye should murder, or plunder, or steal, or commit adultery; nor even have I suffered that ye should commit any manner of wickedness, and have taught you that ye should keep the commandments of the Lord, in all things which he hath commanded you—
>
> **14** ***And even I, myself, have labored with mine own hands that I might serve you, and that ye should not be laden with taxes, and that there should nothing come upon you which was grievous to be borne***—and

of all these things which I have spoken, ye yourselves are witnesses this day.

**15** Yet, my brethren, I have not done these things that I might boast, neither do I tell these things that thereby I might accuse you; but I tell you these things that ye may know that I can answer a clear conscience before God this day.

**16** ***Behold, I say unto you that because I said unto you that I had spent my days in your service, I do not desire to boast, for I have only been in the service of God.***

**17** ***And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God.***

**18** ***Behold, ye have called me your king; and if I, whom ye call your king, do labor to serve you, then ought not ye to labor to serve one another?***

**19** ***And behold also, if I, whom ye call your king, who has spent his days in your service, and yet has been in the service of God, do merit any thanks from you, O how you ought to thank your heavenly King!***

**20** I say unto you, my brethren, that if you should render all the thanks and praise which your whole soul has power to possess, to that God who has created you, and has kept and preserved you, and has caused that ye should rejoice, and has granted that ye should live in peace one with another—

**21** I say unto you that if ye should serve him who has created you from the beginning, and is preserving you from day to day, by lending you breath, that ye may live and move and do according to your own will, and even supporting you from one moment to another—I say, if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants.

## The Bible: A Second Witness

**1 Peter 5**

**2** Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for ***filthy lucre,*** but of a ready mind;

**1 Corinthians 9**

**16** For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!

**17** For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.

**18** What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ ***without charge,*** that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

**Matthew 10**

**7** And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

**8** Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, ***freely give.***

**9** Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

**10** Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

## Modern Testimonies: A Third Witness

**Elder Pratt**

The Lord will never come until he has organized his kingdom on the earth, and prepared his people by sending a messenger to prepare the way before him (D&C 45:9); that messenger has come, and the man that delivered it has been slain, namely, Joseph Smith...

If the people had read the Scriptures they would [be] looking [and see]... if they had not listened to a set of blind guides (Matt. 23:24), ***who have hired out for money to tell them the Scriptures mean something else.***

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 3, Discourse 19, p. 127)

**Hugh Nibley**

My sense of urgency comes from the fact that I spend all my days now with the scriptures. And the two marks of the Church I see are and have been for a long time these: a reverence for wealth and a contempt for the scriptures. Naturally, the two go hand in hand. We should call attention to the fact that these things we are doing are against the work of the Lord. There is one saying of Joseph Smith I think of quite often: "If the heavens seem silent at a time when we desperately need revelation, it is because of covetousness in the Church. God has often sealed up the heavens because of covetousness." And now the Church isn't just shot through with covetousness, it is saturated with covetousness. And so the heavens are going to be closed. We're told we don't get revelation if we put our trust in money in the bank.

("Nibley Talks about Contemporary Issues," p. 13)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

I have said this to let my friends know that I am right. As I grow older my heart grows tenderer for you. I am at all times willing to give up every thing that is wrong, for I wish this people ***to have a virtuous leader.*** I have set your minds at liberty by letting you know ***the things of Christ Jesus.*** When I shrink not from your defence, ***will you throw me away for a new man who slanders you?*** I love you for your reception of me. ***Have I asked you for your money? No, you know better; I appeal to the poor. I say cursed be that man or woman who says that I have taken of your money*** ...

(*Joseph Smith Papers,* History, 1838–1856, Vol. F-1 [1 May 1844–8 Aug. 1844])

**Doctrine and Covenants 121**

**34** Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?

**35** ***Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world,*** and aspire to the honors of men...

**Elder Dallin H. Oaks**

Some may serve for hope of earthly reward. Such a man or woman might serve in Church positions or in private acts of mercy in an effort to achieve prominence or cultivate contacts that would increase income or aid in acquiring wealth. Others might serve in order to obtain worldly honors, prominence, or power.

The scriptures have a word for gospel service "for the sake of riches and honor"; it is "priestcraft." (Alma 1:16.) Nephi said, "Priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion." (2 Ne. 26:29.) In these latter days, we are commanded to "seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion." (D&C 6:6.) Unfortunately, not all who accomplish works under that heading are really intending to build up Zion or strengthen the faith of the people of God. Other motives can be at work.

Service that is ostensibly unselfish but is really for the sake of riches or honor surely comes within the Savior's condemnation of those who "outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ... are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." (Matt. 23:28.) Such service earns no gospel reward.

("Why Do We Serve?" General Conference, October 1984)

**Elder George Q. Cannon**

Our theory is that a man who cannot sustain himself and also teach others how to sustain themselves ***is unfit for a leading position,*** and

> he becomes a drone in the great hive. On that account we compel or require ***every minister in this Church to sustain himself.*** Jesus said that he who is greatest among you let him be the servant of all, (Matt. 23:11) and we have carried this into effect—the servant of the whole people is the President of the Church. The man who is the greatest servant in a settlement is the President of the settlement, or the Bishop of a ward.... By this means the ministry in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is an active one, carrying the blessings of spiritual and temporal salvation into the midst of the people.
>
> It has been by the labors of such men that this community has been founded, and this once barren desert changed into a fruitful field (Isa. 29:17) and made to blossom as the rose. (Isa. 35:1) Through the labors of the Apostles, Elders and Bishops of this Church, settlements have been extended to the remotest bounds of the Territory, north, south, east and west. They have been the pioneers in all great labors, ***not saying to the people, "Give us of your wealth and substance, we want to be sustained in idleness, that we may rule over you;" but on the contrary they have said, "Come, brethren, let us go and accomplish this labor that God has laid upon us." They have been the pioneers in all these labors—these Apostles, Presidents, Bishops, Dignitaries, these men who are supposed to fatten on the labors of the people.***
>
> Instead of doing that, they have been the creators of the wealth that the people now enjoy; they have been the fathers of the people, the people have been the objects of their paternal care from the beginning until today. ***I would not give a fig for a leading man who would not act in this capacity; he is worth nothing, and deserves no place in the midst of the people of God.*** Men to save their fellow men and to be ministers of Jesus Christ must have the spirit of Jesus. ***His spirit was one of self sacrifice, one that prompted him to go forth and save the people, not to be a burden upon them, not to crush them. That is priestcraft; and wherever that system prevails a system of despicable priestcraft prevails, and God is angry with it and with those who practice it.***
>
> ("Tithing," *Journal of Discourses,* Volume 15, Discourse 22, p. 145)

## Priestcraft: Sons of Perdition

**Helaman 13**

> **24** Yea, wo unto this people, because of this time which has arrived, that ye do cast out the prophets, and do mock them, and cast stones at them, and do slay them, and do all manner of iniquity unto them, even as they did of old time.

Okay, so now we are back to this same theme once again. "But," I hear one say, "we don't stone the prophets and throw them out and slay them! And we don't support priestcraft! We simply support financially people we want to hear preach." Let's keep reading...

**Helaman 13**

> **25** And now when ye talk, ye say: ***If our days had been in the days of our fathers of old, we would not have slain the prophets; we would not have stoned them, and cast them out.***

Wha-oh! Look out! Now the Lord through His prophet is talking directly to you! Let's hear him out.

**Helaman 13**

> **26** ***Behold ye are worse than they;*** for as the Lord liveth, if a prophet come among you and declareth unto you the word of the Lord, which testifieth of your sins and iniquities, ye are angry with him, and cast him out and seek all manner of ways to destroy him; yea, you will say that he is a false prophet, and that he is a sinner, and of the devil, because he testifieth that your deeds are evil.
>
> **27** But behold, if a man shall come among you and shall say: Do this, and there is no iniquity; do that and ye shall not suffer; yea, he will say: Walk after ***the pride of your own hearts*** [i.e., "spirit-o-meters"]; yea, walk after the pride of your eyes, and ***do whatsoever your heart desireth***—and if a man shall come among you and say this, ye will receive him, and say that he is a prophet [or a great teacher, YouTuber, writer, etc.].
>
> **28** Yea, ye will lift him up, and ye will give unto him of your substance; ye will give unto him of your gold, and of your silver, and ye will clothe him with costly apparel; and because he speaketh flattering words unto you, and he saith that all is well, then ye will not find fault with him.

(Clearly identifying the giving of substance to the person as the key to priestcraft.)

> **29** O ye wicked and ye perverse generation; ye hardened and ye stiffnecked people, how long will ye suppose that the Lord will suffer you? Yea, how long will ye suffer yourselves to be led by foolish and blind guides? Yea, how long will ye choose darkness rather than light?
>
> **30** Yea, behold, the anger of the Lord is ***already*** kindled against you; behold, he hath cursed the land because of your iniquity.
>
> **31** And behold, the time cometh that he curseth your riches, that they become slippery, that ye cannot hold them; and in the days of your poverty ye cannot retain them.
>
> **32** ***And in the days of your poverty ye shall cry unto the Lord; and in vain shall ye cry, for your desolation is already come upon you, and your destruction is made sure; and then shall ye weep and howl in that day, saith the Lord of Hosts.*** And then shall ye lament, and say:
>
> **33** O that I had repented, and had not killed the prophets, and stoned them, and cast them out. Yea, in that day ye shall say: O that we had remembered the Lord our God in the day that he gave us our riches, and then they would not have become slippery that we should lose them; for behold, our riches are gone from us.

Pay. Close. Attention. Saints of God.

"Ye are worse than [those who killed the prophets]" if ye go about seeking ways to destroy the prophet/keys, tear them down, belittle them, etc. "Ye are ***worse*** than [those who killed the prophets]" if ye go about seeking those who will preach unto you flattering words and give them substance—in other words ***"do[ing] whatsoever your heart desireth,"*** or, as the Lord put it in Doctrine and Covenants 1:16:

**Doctrine and Covenants 1**

> **16** They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.

**2 Nephi 10**

> **5** But because of ***priestcrafts*** and iniquities, they at Jerusalem will stiffen their necks against him, ***that he be crucified.***

**3 Nephi 30**

> **2** Turn, all ye Gentiles, from your wicked ways; and repent of your evil doings, of your lyings and deceivings, and of your whoredoms, and of your secret abominations, and your idolatries, and of your murders, and your ***priestcrafts,*** and your envyings, and your strifes, and from all your wickedness and abominations, and come unto me, and be baptized in my name, that ye may receive a remission of your sins, and be filled with the Holy Ghost, ***that ye may be numbered with my people who are of the house of Israel.***

**3 Nephi 21**

> **19** And it shall come to pass that all lyings, and deceivings, and envyings, and strifes, and ***priestcrafts,*** and whoredoms, shall be done away.

**President John Taylor**

Hear it you Elders of Israel, you Presidents of Stakes, you Bishops and you men in authority, and you Elders everywhere! This is the reason why men have departed from the truth and have apostatized.

"Hence many are called but few are chosen. No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned; by kindness and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy and without guile."

This is the reason why so many have stumbled, ***and I will say still further that unless the elders of Israel realize their position, whether they be presidents of stakes, or whether they be the Twelve, or the First Presidency; or whether they be Bishops, or whether they hold any office of authority in the Church and kingdom of God—no matter what position they may occupy, if they go to work to seek to aggrandise themselves at the expense of the Church and kingdom of God, the Spirit of God will be withdrawn from them and they will be left as others have been left to "kick against the pricks" and to fight against God, and they will find their way to perdition instead of to the celestial kingdom of God.***

(*Millennial Star,* Volume 43 (3 May 1881): 279, 283–85; Eric D. Bateman, *The Prophets Have Spoken,* Volume 1)

**Mosiah 2**

**36** And now, I say unto you, my brethren, that after ye have known and have been taught all these things, if ye should transgress and go contrary to that which has been spoken, that ye do withdraw yourselves from the Spirit of the Lord, that it may have no place in you to guide you in wisdom's paths that ye may be blessed, prospered, and preserved—

**37** I say unto you, that the man that doeth this, the same cometh out in open rebellion against God; therefore he listeth to obey the evil spirit, and becometh an enemy to all righteousness; therefore, the Lord has no place in him, for he dwelleth not in unholy temples.

**38** Therefore if that man repenteth not, and remaineth and dieth an enemy to God, the demands of divine justice do awaken his immortal soul to a lively sense of his own guilt, which doth cause him to shrink from the presence of the Lord, and doth fill his breast with guilt, and pain, and anguish, which is like an unquenchable fire, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever.

**39** And now I say unto you, that mercy hath no claim on that man; therefore his final doom is to endure a never-ending torment.

**40** O, all ye old men, and also ye young men, and you little children who can understand my words, for I have spoken plainly unto you that ye might understand, I pray that ye should awake to a remembrance of the awful situation of those that have fallen into transgression.

**41** And moreover, I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. For behold, they are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual; and if they hold out faithful to the end they are received into heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness. O remember, remember that these things are true; for the Lord God hath spoken it.

**Spencer W. Kimball**

There are those today who seem to take pride in disagreeing with the orthodox teachings of the Church and who present their own opinions which are at variance with the revealed truth. Some may be partially innocent in the matter; others are feeding their own egotism; and some seem to be deliberate. Men may think as they please, but they have no right to impose upon others their unorthodox views. Such persons should realize that their own souls are in jeopardy. The Lord said to us through the Prophet Joseph: "... teach the principles of my gospel, which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in the which is the fulness of the gospel. And they shall observe the covenants and church articles to do them, and these shall be their teachings, as they shall be directed by the Spirit. ... And if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach" (D&C 42:12–14).

The great objective of all our work is to build character and increase faith in the lives of those whom we serve. If one cannot accept and teach the program of the Church in an orthodox way without reservations, he should not teach. It would be the part of honor to resign his position. Not only would he be dishonest and deceitful, but he is also actually under condemnation, for the Savior said that it were better that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he be cast into the sea than that he should lead astray doctrinally or betray the cause or give offense, destroying the faith of one of "these little ones" who believe in him. And remember that this means not only the small children, it includes even adults who believe and trust in God. ...

The Savior also said: And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. (Matt. 10:28.)

In our own Society, the murderer who kills the body is hunted, imprisoned, and executed, but the character who kills the soul by implanting doubt and shattering faith is permitted not only to go free but also is often retained in high places. The body which is killed will rise again in the resurrection with little damage to its eternal welfare, but he whose faith has been shattered may suffer long ages before complete restoration of spiritual stature can be had, if at all.

(*Conference Report,* April 1948, pp. 109–110)

**3 Nephi 29**

**4** And when ye shall see these sayings coming forth among you, then ye need not any longer spurn at the doings of the Lord, for the sword of his justice is in his right hand; and behold, at that day, if ye shall spurn at his doings he will cause that it shall soon overtake you.

**5** Wo unto him that spurneth at the doings of the Lord; yea, ***wo unto him that shall deny the Christ and his works!***

**6** ***Yea, wo unto him that shall deny the revelations of the Lord,*** and that shall say the Lord no longer worketh by revelation, or by prophecy, or by gifts, or by tongues, or by healings, or by the power of the Holy Ghost!

**7** ***Yea, and wo unto him that shall say at that day, to get gain, that there can be no miracle wrought by Jesus Christ; for he that doeth this shall become like unto the son of perdition, for whom there was no mercy, according to the word of Christ!***

**8** Yea, and ye need not any longer hiss, nor spurn, nor make game of the Jews, nor any of the remnant of the house of Israel; ***for behold, the Lord remembereth his covenant unto them, and he will do unto them according to that which he hath sworn.***

**9** ***Therefore ye need not suppose that ye can turn the right hand of the Lord unto the left, that he may not execute judgment unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he hath made unto the house of Israel.***

**Matthew 18:5–10. A Warning Not to Offend Little Ones**

Though Jesus was speaking to leaders of His day when He issued a stern warning not to offend little ones, the message recorded in Matthew 18:5–10 applies to all of us (see D&C 50:40–41 for a broader definition of "little children"). We must not cause anyone seeking greater understanding of the gospel plan to stumble in their faith, nor should we do anything to block their progress toward eternal life. **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** taught about this warning:

***"Few crimes are as gross and wicked as that of teaching false doctrine and leading souls away from God and salvation. ... If eternal joy is the reward given those who teach the truth and bring souls to salvation, shall not those who teach false doctrines and lead souls to damnation receive as their reward eternal remorse?*** (D. & C. 18:10–16.)

"... ***It is better to die and be denied the blessings of continued mortal existence than to live and lead souls from the truth, thereby gaining eternal damnation for oneself"*** (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 1:420).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Do Not Betray the Brethren

O ye Twelve! and all Saints! profit by this important Key—that in all your trials, troubles, temptations, afflictions, bonds, imprisonments and death, see to it, that you do not betray heaven; that you do not betray Jesus Christ; ***that you do not betray the brethren;*** that you do not betray the revelations of God, whether in Bible, Book of Mormon, or Doctrine and Covenants, or any other that ever was or ever will be given and revealed unto man in this world or that which is to come. Yea, in all your kicking and flounderings, see to it that you do not this thing, ***lest innocent blood be found upon your skirts, and you go down to hell. All other sins are not to be compared to sinning against the Holy Ghost, and proving a traitor to the brethren.***

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 156)

**Doctrine and Covenants 132**

**27** The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, which shall not be forgiven in the world nor out of the world, is in that ye commit murder wherein ye shed innocent blood, and assent unto my death, after ye have received my new and everlasting covenant, saith the Lord God; and he that abideth not this law can in nowise enter into my glory, but shall be damned, saith the Lord.

(New and everlasting covenant = sealed in the temple)

**Alma 36**

**14** Yea, and ***I had murdered many of his children, or rather led them away unto destruction;*** yea, and in fine so great had been my iniquities, that the very thought of coming into the presence of my God did rack my soul with inexpressible horror.

**Alma 39**

**3** And this is not all, my son. Thou didst do that which was grievous unto me; for thou didst forsake the ministry, and did go over into the land of Siron among the borders of the Lamanites, after the harlot Isabel.

**4** Yea, she did steal away the hearts of many; but this was no excuse for thee, my son. Thou shouldst have tended to the ministry wherewith thou wast entrusted.

**5** Know ye not, my son, that these things are an abomination in the sight of the Lord; yea, most abominable above all sins ***save it be the shedding of innocent blood or denying the Holy Ghost?***

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

All sins shall be forgiven, except the sin against the Holy Ghost; for Jesus will save all except the sons of perdition. What must a man do to commit the unpardonable sin? He must receive the Holy Ghost, have the heavens opened unto him, and know God, and then sin against Him. After a man has sinned against the Holy Ghost, there is no repentance for him. ... and from that time he begins to be an enemy. This is the case with many apostates of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

When a man begins to be an enemy to this work, he hunts me, he seeks to kill me, and never ceases to thirst for my blood. He gets the spirit of the devil—the same spirit that they had who crucified the Lord of Life—the same spirit that sins against the Holy Ghost. You cannot save such persons; you cannot bring them to repentance; they make open war, like the devil, and awful is the consequence.

I advise all of you to be careful what you do, or you may by-and-by find out that you have been deceived. Stay yourselves; do not give way; don't make any hasty moves, you may be saved.

The best men bring forth the best works. The man who tells you words of life is the man who can save you. I warn you against all evil characters who sin against the Holy Ghost; for there is no redemption for them in this world nor in the world to come.

("The Forgiveness of Sins," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 358)

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who preach for gain and who preach against "the Lord remember[ing] his covenant unto them, and ... do[ing] unto them according to that which he hath sworn" (3 Ne. 29:8) will become Sons of Perdition. Period.

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**16** Therefore, let your hearts be comforted concerning Zion; for all flesh is in mine hands; be still and know that I am God.

**17** Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered.

**18** They that remain, and are pure in heart, shall return, and come to their inheritances, they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy, to build up the waste places of Zion—

**19** ***And all these things that the prophets might be fulfilled.***

**20** ***And, behold, there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed,*** for the work of the gathering of my saints

**(9-8) Matthew 12:32. What Is the Difference Between Rejecting Jesus and Denying the Holy Ghost?**

"A man who has not received the gift of the Holy Ghost and therefore who has never 'tasted of the heavenly gift,' may be guilty of blasphemy against Jesus Christ and be forgiven on his repentance, but so great is the testimony through the gift of the Holy Ghost, should he turn against the Lord and fight his work, there is no forgiveness. The shedding of innocent blood is not confined to taking lives of the innocent, but is also included in seeking to destroy the word of God, and putting Christ to open shame. Those who have known the truth and then fight against the authorized servants of Jesus Christ also fight against him, for they who fight against his servants also do it unto him, and thus are guilty of his blood." (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions,* 1:63-64.)

(*The Life and Teachings of Jesus & His Apostles* (Second ed.), 1979, p. 67)

This isn't a small deal; this is an extremely important deal—a matter that one could become a Son of Perdition over, thus speaks The Book of Mormon as clear as words can be.

## Exceptions to the Doctrine (Not "Policy")

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

What is the rule of interpretation [of scripture]? Just no interpretation at all. Understand it precisely as it reads.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 276)

Is there a single instance in the entire Book of Mormon where it says that it is ok to get paid to preach the word of God? No, not a single case. Is there a single case in the Book of Mormon where the preachers of God's church esteemed themselves to be above or better than other members' requirement to labor with their own hands for their own support? No, not a single case. If we were to interpret the scriptures literally and plainly, as they are to be interpreted, what are the irrefutable proofs when using God's word as the arbiter?

***Any time*** anyone preaches the word of God, teaches the word of God, stands as a witness for God, etc., etc., for gain—that is priestcraft. That is the very act of turning the things of God into an act of mammon. There was no exception for king Benjamin; there is no exception for you, baring a special exception from the keys of God. Period.

**President Brigham Young**

> A false principle, a false theory, whether in mechanism or philosophy, requires much argument and superior talent to sustain it, but when the truth is presented it commends itself to the understanding of the people so readily that it requires no great amount of learning to substantiate it, nor much skill to declare it to the honest who want truth, and it remains firm and sound.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 18, Discourse 45)

## For Thy Sake, Cast Not Me Out

**Hugh Nibley**

> They have cast an obnoxious young lightweight (a very minor devil) to the role of the Evil One while the one most qualified to play it prefers to take the part of a dignified, upright, mature, and often charming gentleman. It was clever to put a pathetic, long-haired, dirty, neurotic, mixed-up, idealistic, sex-hungry fool in the role of the heavy while an actor of infinitely greater skill and experience takes the highly respectable part of the archpillar of society.
>
> (Chapter 2, *Approaching Zion*)

# SECTION III

# The Marvelous Work and Wonder

*"The 'marvelous work and a wonder' spoken of by the Lord... includes the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the priesthood and the Church, and the presence of latter-day prophets on the earth. But it is even more than these things. It is the restoration of* all *things, including the establishment of Zion on the earth again."*

*—Book Of Mormon Student Manual (1996, pp. 39–40)*

*"Behold, when ye shall rend that veil of unbelief which doth cause you to remain in your awful state of wickedness, and hardness of heart, and blindness of mind, then shall the great and marvelous things which have been hid up from the foundation of the world from you—yea, when ye shall call upon the Father in my name, with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, then shall ye know that the Father hath remembered the covenant which he made unto your fathers, O house of Israel."*

*—Moroni (Ether 4:15)*

*"For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and a marvelous work among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them. But behold, the life of my servant [Joseph] shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them. Yet I will heal him, for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil. Therefore it shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words... which the Father shall cause him to bring forth unto the Gentiles, ... they shall be cut off from among my people who are of the covenant. And my people who are a remnant of Jacob shall ... build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem. And then shall ... [my people] be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem. And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst."*

*—Jesus Christ (3 Nephi 21:9–12, 23–25)*

*"We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory."*

*—Joseph Smith Jr. (Article of Faith 10)*

# Joseph Smith to Return

## Introduction

**2 Nephi 27:24-28: "A Marvelous Work and a Wonder"**

> The "marvelous work and a wonder" spoken of by the Lord in 2 Nephi 27:26 ***includes*** the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the priesthood and the Church, and the presence of latter-day prophets on the earth. ***But it is even more than these things.*** It is the restoration of *all* things, including the establishment of Zion on the earth again.
>
> (*Book of Mormon Student Manual,* 1996, PDF Version, pp. 39–40)

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

> ***"When*** the lost tribes come… it ***will be*** a most wonderful sight and marvelous thing ***when they do come to Zion."***
>
> (*Doctrines of Salvation,* Volume 3, p. 605)

It is important to note that when this quote was given, the church was already global and President Joseph Fielding Smith used the word "when," meaning it was yet a future event. Missionary global work is not ***the*** marvelous work and a wonder. It is imperative to understand these events for the Savior said, "for it shall deceive almost the very elect."

The Book of Mormon, the restoration of the priesthood, etc. were all precursors to ***the*** marvelous work and a wonder. The Book of Mormon was written and designed to get us ready for ***the*** marvelous work and a wonder, i.e., to get us ready to build Zion and to get us ready for the sealed portion of the scriptures and to get us ready for the return of the ten tribes etc.

**Brother Hyrum Andrus** taught in his lecture "Christ's Coming to Zion, Jerusalem and the World":

> "Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people… and a wonder." Now, that marvelous work and wonder, according to the angel Moroni to Joseph Smith, is a work subsequent to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Let me turn here to the Messenger and Advocate, where Oliver Cowdery writes about the visit of the angel Moroni and says this: "Therefore, says the Lord, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder. The wisdom of their wise shall perish, the understanding of their prudent shall be hid. For according to his covenants which he made with his ancient saints, his people, the house of Israel, must come to the knowledge of the gospel and own their Messiah whom their fathers rejected, and with them the fulness of the Gentiles be gathered in to rejoice in one fold under one Shepherd." Now, this great gathering of Israel hasn't yet taken place. And the marvelous work and a wonder isn't just the restoration of the gospel. It is a marvelous work and I heartily agree with Elder LeGrand Richards in calling a book, A Marvelous Work and a Wonder. But now note what he says: "This cannot be brought about until first certain preparatory things have been accomplished." You can't get ***the*** marvelous work and a wonder, which is not the Book of Mormon, it's the gathering of Israel, it's the building of Zion, it's the turning of things upside down with a new order of society and a government of law. It's the endowment of glory, it's this marvelous thing that finally ushers in the millennial period. That's ***the*** marvelous work and a wonder. Take a Concordance and look through the Book of Mormon under the word "marvelous," and read all the passages where it's used. And that's the context in which it is written, that's it. It puts it in this latter-day when you are going to finally redeem Israel and establish Zion. That is ***the*** marvelous work and a wonder, and the endowment of Zion with glory, the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.
>
> ("Lecture 19: Christ's Coming to Zion, Jerusalem and the World")

So simply put, this is ***the*** marvelous work and a wonder that will be so miraculous that as Jeremiah put it, we will altogether stop talking about Moses (Jeremiah 16:14–16). That is the marvelous work and a wonder that we will be discussing in this section of the book, and it is impossible to understand this without understanding Joseph Smith's role in it. As we are talking about the marvelous work and a wonder yet to take place, we will not be discussing Joseph Smith's past acts, but rather his continued and future roles.

## Who Am I?

**Doctrine and Covenants 58**

> **31** Who am I, saith the Lord, that have promised and have not fulfilled?

Before we even begin this conversation, we as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints need to answer this question honestly and frankly. If we can't agree on this, then we worship two different Gods. If we don't agree with this, then (as Joseph Smith taught us in the Lectures on Faith) we will not be able to "exercise sufficient faith unto life and salvation"… What is that question?

"Do we believe that the Lord can promise someone something, that individual can be faithful, and the Lord can not fulfill what he promised that individual and yet remain a God?"

There are such members, there are such Christians, but as Joseph Smith taught us, if one believes such a thing, if one believes in a God that can lie, if one believes in a God who changes, etc. then one will never be able to exercise faith unto life and salvation (Lectures on Faith). If we don't have such faith then the problem is us, our problem is with the doctrine, our problem is with the truth, and the truth moves on without us. I know that God changes not, I know that God does not lie, I know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and not just that, but that he was and is the prophet head of this the last and greatest dispensation and there is no error in the revelation. If the Lord promised something to someone and that someone was faithful until death, I not only know that the Lord will literally give that individual everything He promised them, but I also know that anyone who preaches anything even remotely against that have forsaken their own mercy, as Jonah teaches us "those that observe lying vanities, forsake their own mercy" (Jonah 2: 8).

Why is this important to nail down? Because A) if we know the Lord promised Joseph Smith things, we know the Lord will literally fulfill what he promised Joseph Smith and B) if we find people teaching that the Lord will not literally fulfill what he promised Joseph Smith we can clearly and obviously set them aside as apostates to the truth. Period.

So what did the Lord promise Joseph Smith?

**Blessing given by Joseph Smith Sr.** (December 9, 1834)

> Joseph, my son, I lay my hands upon thy head in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to confirm upon thee a father's blessing.
>
> ***The Lord thy God has called thee by name out of the heavens:*** thou hast heard his voice from on high from time to time, even in thy youth. The hand of the angel of his presence has been extended toward thee by which thou hast been ***lifted up and sustained;*** yea, the Lord has delivered thee from the hands of thine enemies and thou hast been made to rejoice in his salvation: thou hast sought to know his ways, and from

thy childhood thou hast meditated much upon the great things of his law.

Thou hast suffered much in thy youth, and the poverty and afflictions of thy father's family have been a grief to thy soul. Thou hast desired to see them delivered from bondage, for thou hast lov'd them with a perfect love. Thou hast stood by thy father, and like Shem, would have covered his nakedness, rather than see him exposed to shame: when the daughters of the Gentiles laughed, thy heart has been moved with a just anger to avenge thy kindred. Thou hast been an obedient son: the commands of thy father and the reproofs of thy mother, thou hast respected and obeyed— for all these things the Lord my God will bless thee.

Thou hast been called, even in thy youth to ***the great work of the Lord: to do a work*** in this generation ***which no other man would do as thyself,*** in all things according to the will of the Lord. ***A marvelous work and a wonder*** has the Lord wrought by thy hand, even that which shall prepare the way for the remnants of his people to come in among the Gentiles, with their fulness, as the tribes of Israel are restored.

I bless thee with the blessings of thy fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and even the blessings of thy father Joseph, the son of Jacob. Behold, he looked after his posterity in the last days, when they should be scattered and driven by the Gentiles, and wept before the Lord: he sought diligently to know from whence the son should come who should bring forth the word of the Lord, by which they might be enlightened, and brought back to the true fold, and his eyes beheld thee, my son: his heart rejoiced and his soul was satisfied, and he said,

"As my blessings are to extend to the utmost bounds of the everlastings hills; as my father's blessing prevailed above the blessings of his progen[i]tors, and as my branches are to run over the wall, and my seed are to inherit the choice land whereon the Zion of God shall stand in the last days, from among my seed, scattered with the Gentiles, shall a choice Seer arise whose bowels shall be as a fountain of truth, whose loins shall be girded with the girdle of righteousness, whose hands shall be lifted with acceptance before the God of Jacob to turn away his anger from his annointed, whose heart shall meditate great wisdom, whose intelligence shall circumscribe and comprehend the deep things of God, and whose mouth shall utter the law of the just: ***His feet shall stand upon the neck of his enemies, and he shall walk upon the ashes of those who seek his destruction:*** with wine and oil it shall he be sustained, and he shall feed upon the heritage of Jacob his father: the just shall desire his society, and the upright in heart shall be his companions: ***No weapon formed against him shall prosper, and though the wicked mar him for a little season, he shall be like one rising up in the heat of wine—he shall roar in his strength, and the Lord shall put to flight his persecutors:*** he shall be blessed like the fruitful olive, and his memory shall be as sweet as the choice cluster of the first ripe grapes. Like a shief [sheaf] fully ripe, gathered into the garner, so shall he stand before the Lord, having produced a hundred fold."

***Thus spake my father Joseph. Therefore, my son, I know for a surety that these things will be fulfilled, and I confirm upon thee all these blessings. Thou shalt live to do the work which the Lord shall command thee: thou shalt hold the keys of this ministry, even the presidency of this church, both in time and in eternity.***

Thy heart shall be enlarged, and thou shalt be able to fill up the measure of thy days according to the will of the Lord.

***Thou shalt speak the word of the Lord and the earth shall tremble; the mountains shall move and the rivers shall turn out of their course. Thou shalt escape the edge of the sword, and put to flight the armies of the wicked.***

At thy word the lame shall walk, the deaf shall hear and the blind shall see.

***Thou shalt be gathered to Zion and in the goodly land thou shalt enjoy thine inheritance;*** thy children and thy children's children to the latest generation; for thy name and the names of thy posterity shall be recorded in the book of the Lord, even in the book of blessings genealogies, for their joy and benefit forever.

And now, my son, what more shall I say? Thou art as a fruitful olive and a choice vine: thou shalt be laden with precious fruit. Thousands and tens of thousands shall come to a knowledge of the truth through thy ministry, and thou shalt rejoice with them in the Celestial Kingdom:

***Thou shalt stand upon the earth when it shall reel to and fro as a drunken man, and be removed out of its place: thou shalt stand when the mighty judgments go forth to the destruction of the wicked: thou shalt stand on mount Zion when the tribes of Jacob come shouting from the north, and with thy brethren, the sons of Ephraim, crown them in the name of Jesus Christ:***

***Thou shalt see thy Redeemer Come in the clouds of heaven, and with the just receive the hallowed throng with shouts of hallalujahs, praise the Lord.*** Amen.

(*The Joseph Smith Papers,* "Blessing from Joseph Smith Sr.," 9 December 1834)

**Blessing given by Joseph Smith Sr.** (January 23, 1833)

... The presidency then took the seat in their turn, according to their age, beginning at the eldest, and received their anointing and blessing under the hand, of father Smith; and in my turn ***my father anointed my head, and sealed upon me the blessings of Moses, to lead Israel in the latter Days, even as Moses led him in days of old; also the blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.*** All of the Presidency laid th[e]ir hands upon me, and pronounced upon my head many prophecies, and blessings, many of which I shall not notice at this time.

(*History of the Church,* 2:379–80; "Section 137, Vision of the Celestial Kingdom," *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition), 2001, p. 353)

**Blessing given by Oliver Cowdery** (September 22, 1835)

Preface written by Oliver Cowdery: "The reader will remember the remarks made at the commencement of the foregoing blessings, pronounced by the first patriarch, and first elder in this church, Joseph Smith Jr. I said that he had authority to bless; this is so, and it may be understood that those men whose names are mentioned in the blessings by his mouth, had long been employed in the work of the Lord, and were personally known to him. I mean those besides his own family, who are myself, Frederick G. Williams, Sidney Rigdon, David Whitmer, John Whitmer, John Corrill and William W. Phelps. Now, after writing these blessings at the mouth of the Seer, I greatly desired to know the mind of the Spirit concerning this my brother, with whom I had labored so many years; And accordingly I besought the Lord with prayer and fasting, who opened the heavens upon me, ***And thus, while in the heavenly vision, I wrote the following blessing, which is a part of that which was shown and declared should come upon my brother. Therefore, let no one doubt of their correctness and truth, for they will verily be fulfilled. (signed) Oliver Cowdery."*** (*Patriarchal Blessings Book,* Volume 2:28, Church Historians Office)

Blessed of the Lord is my brother, for the integrity of his heart and the steadfastness of his soul. Upheld by the arm of the Almighty he shall never fall, but shall be strengthened by his right hand till he overcomes. ***Like Jacob of old he shall wrestle with the angel, and as a prince shall he have power with God, and shall prevail.***

Ever faithful to friends and true to his word, the goodness of the Most High shall sustain him, and thousands shall stand up to defend him from the hand of his enemies, and put forth the hand and ward off the blow were it needful: ***but ere his foes are aware he shall be hid under the pavilion of the Lord Jehovah;*** for, with the voice of his thunder shall he strike terror to their hearts, and as with the wings of an eagle shall my brother be carried beyond all harm, by the power of the Anointed.

***From amid the burning bush, like Moses of old, shall he hear the voice, saying, I am the God of thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, I have seen, I have seen, the affliction of my people and am come down to deliver them: go, thou, and say to the strength of my house, To your tents, O Israel: build up the wastes and raise up the foundation of desolation that this generation has made. Thus shall he be honored of the Lord, and thus shall it be recorded of him, that the generations to come may bless his name, in Israel, saying, The Lord make thee as Joseph the Seer, who was of the house of Ephraim, the brother of Manasseh: the Lord do thee good and bring peace and blessings upon [upon] thy house as he brought them upon the house of Joseph the Seer, who was raised up of a choice vine from the stem of Jacob through the root of Joseph, even that Joseph who was separated from his brethren—***

***For, like Joseph of old shall he be: he shall save the just from desolation, by the wise counsel of the Almighty; for by his direction shall they gather into storehouses and barns, till they overflow with the richness of the fruit of harvest: and by this means shall the just be saved from famine, while the nations of the wicked are distressed and faint.***

***In due time shall he go forth toward the north, and by the power of his word shall the deep begin to give way and the ice melt before the sun. By the keys of the Kingdom shall he lead Israel into the land of Zion while the house of Jacob shouts in the danse and in the song— Joy, O my soul, in that day, for thou shalt be with him and bear thy part in the keys which are confirmed thee for an everlasting priesthood, forever and ever— Joy, O my heart, in that day, with thanksgiving and with praise, for thou shalt stand with him before the hosts of Israel— the lame shall leap as a hart, the old shall renew his strength, and the virgin of Israel, with the youth, shall exalt the name of our God upon harps and instruments of tens[e] strings.***

***He shall be a shure arrow in the bow of his God, for he shall be hid under the shadow of his wing. His loins shall be like iron, girded by the hand of the Lord, and his feet shall be swift to execute the commandment of the Most High when he shall say, Destroy. His name shall be had in everlasting remembrance, and his name after him, for they shall be saved to the uttermost. His fame shall be sounded in foreign lands, even to the ends of the earth,*** as well as nigh at home: for in this the times shall change— a prophet shall have honor in his own country. His learning and wisdom shall astonish the great, for they shall acknowledge that by his intelligence he has far surpassed their learning and their science. In palaces of governors, rulers and kings shall he be honored, even in his person, for God shall give him power to prevail.

***He shall be a lawgiver to Israel and shall teach the house of Jacob the statutes of the Most High.*** His testimony shall shine like the sun, and the weight of his influence shall be like the great river that rises on the east of the lasting hills, and flows into the great deep— so shall his righteousness ever abound. He shall partake of the blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: the chief things of the ancient mountains, the precious things that couch beneath, and of the treasures hid in the sand.

***The records of past ages and generations, and the histories of ancient days shall he bring forth: even the record of the Nephites shall he again obtain, with all those hid up by Mormon, and others who were righteous, and many others, till he is overwhelmed with knowledge. No precious thing shall slumber from his possession, for he shall be covered with the most choice of all ages, till his soul shall be satisfied and his heart shall say, Enough, Enough!***

***In his hands shall the Urim and Thummim remain and the holy ministry, and the keys of the evangelical priesthood, also, for an everlasting priesthood forever, even the patriarchal; for, behold, he is the first patriarch in the last days. He shall sit in the great assembly and general council of patriarchs, and execute the will and commandment of God under the direction of the Ancient of Days; for he shall have his place and act in his station. Behold, my brother Joseph is blessed: blessed are all who bless him, and blessed are all those whom he blesses. Multitudes, multitudes, shall come to a knowledge of the truth through his ministry, and he shall be welcomed into the presence of kings and the great ones of the earth; for he shall claim his place among the nobles of the earth and shall be reverenced by them.***

He shall also be filled with abundance of the fat of the earth: his flocks shall bring forth thousands and tens of thousands: his fats [vats] shall overflow with wine and oil: his cattle shall increase to a multitude: he shall have horses and mules, asses, she asses and dromedaries, camels and elephants, and all swift beasts, ***and when he goes forth in haste his chariots shall roar like the approach of an army:*** he shall have gold and silver, precious stones, diamonds, pearls, and the pure platina [platinum], with the antiquities of every kind. Thus shall God bless, and thus shall he be prospered: and ***he shall have peace after a little; for his enemies shall be consumed, many of them, and many shall turn and be his friends in very deed:*** he shall remain to a good old age, even till his head is like the pure wool. Behold, there is no end to the vision, of the multiplicity of blessings and glories which shall come upon my brother Joseph. He shall possess a mansion on high and have an inheritance in that city which is like pure gold, even like transparent glass. His rest shall be glorious and his name remain forever. Thus closes the vision, and thus it shall be; even so. Amen.

(*The Joseph Smith Papers,* "Blessing from Oliver Cowdery, 22 September 1835," pp. 15–16)

**Blessing given by Joseph Smith Sr.** (September 14, 1840)

As recorded by Lucy Mack Smith, mother of the Prophet Joseph Smith:

my husband commenced vomitting blood. I sent immediately for Joseph and Hyrum; who as soon as they came, gave him something to alleviate his distress. This was Saturday night. The next morning Joseph came in and told his father, that he should not be troubled any more for the present with the Missourians: "and," said he, "I can now stay with you as much as you wish."

... [Joseph Smith Sr.] addressed himself to me: "Mother, do you not know, that you are the mother of as great a family as ever lived upon the Earth. The world loves its own, but it does not love us— it hates us because we are not of the world; therefore all their malice is poured out upon us, and they seek to take away our lives. When I look upon my Children and realize that, although they were raised up to do the Lord's work, yet they must pass through scenes of trouble and affliction as long as they live upon the Earth, my heart is pained and I dread to leave them so surrounded by enemies.

***... To Joseph he said: Joseph, my son; thou art called to an high and holy calling— thou art even called to do the work of the Lord— hold out faithful and you shall be blessed, and your children after you— you shall even live to finish your work."—[At this Joseph cried out, weeping "Oh my father will I]—"Yes, said his father, "you shall live to lay out the plan of all the work which, which God has given you to do. This is my dying blessing on your head in the name of Jesus— I also confirm your former blessings upon your head; for it shall be fulfilled, even so. Amen."***

*(Lucy Mack Smith, History,* 1845, pg. 296–298)

Some of the items promised by the Lord here might be foreign to you as you read through them, that is understandable; we will be going into what these things actually mean in the following chapters in this section. What is important to take away for everyone is that A) these things were promised to Joseph Smith by the Lord B) the Lord always fulfills, which means Joseph Smith will obtain all those blessings, C) to take those promised blessings away from Joseph Smith is apostasy, and finally D) if Joseph Smith did not obtain the promised literal blessings in this life, he will obtain them in the resurrection. Period.

## By Jesus' Own Mouth

I believe that the best place to start our process of understanding is to start off with what the Lord said himself. I believe this is important to

do because A) Jesus Christ is the most important part of the pyramid of truth, thus proving validity and B) Jesus lays out the best chronological picture—much clearer than you will find in other locations.

So where are these prophecies concerning Joseph Smith and his resurrection spoken from the lips of Jesus? They are found in 3 Nephi 21—but how do we know that these verses are in fact referring to Joseph Smith?

In the **Old Testament Institute Student Manual,** it states:

> The Savior Himself made it clear that Isaiah 52:13 ***also*** had reference to a servant involved in the "great and marvelous work" of the Father in the latter days (3 Nephi 21:9). The Book of Mormon verse undoubtedly refers to Joseph Smith and the Restoration. Men "marred" him, persecuting him throughout his life until they succeeded in killing him.
>
> ("Isaiah 52:13–15. Who Is the Servant?" *Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third Edition), 2003, p. 197)

The **Book of Mormon Institute Student Manual** clarifies:

> A careful reading of 3 Nephi 21:9–11 suggests that the Lord was referring to the Prophet Joseph Smith when he said, "The life of my servant shall be in my hand" (v. 10; see also Isaiah 52:13–15, 3 Nephi 20:43–44).
>
> ("3 Nephi 21:9–11. 'My Servant,'" *Book of Mormon Student Manual,* 1996, PDF Version, p. 143)

So let us read these passages, but let us replace "my servant" with Joseph Smith so we can get a clear understanding of what is happening here.

**3 Nephi 21**

> **10** But behold, the life of [Joseph Smith] shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt [Joseph Smith], although [Joseph Smith] shall be marred because of them. …

We already had explained above what "marred" had reference to, but for even more concrete evidence let us go down to the footnote for "marred." The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints takes you to:

**D&C 135**

> **1** To seal the testimony of this book and the Book of Mormon, we announce ***the martyrdom*** of Joseph Smith the Prophet, and Hyrum Smith the Patriarch. They were shot in Carthage jail, on the 27th of June, 1844, about five o'clock p.m., by an armed mob—painted black—of from 150 to 200 persons. Hyrum was shot first and fell calmly, exclaiming: I am a dead man! Joseph leaped from the window, and was shot dead in the attempt, exclaiming: O Lord my God! They were both shot after they were dead, in a brutal manner, and both received four balls."

One can now come away with the understanding that one of the meanings of *marred* in this context is *martyred*. So the Lord here is saying that the life of Joseph Smith will be in His hands even after they kill him. So what does the rest of the verse say?

**3 Nephi 21**

> **10** … Yet I will heal [Joseph Smith], for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.

So what does the Lord mean when he says that Joseph will die, he will be martyred, but yet the Lord will heal him?

**Doctrine and Covenants 63**

> **47** He that is faithful and endureth shall overcome the world.
>
> **48** He that sendeth up treasures unto the land of Zion shall receive an inheritance in this world, and his works shall follow him, and also a reward in the world to come.
>
> **49** Yea, and blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth, when the Lord shall come, and old things shall pass away, and all things become new, ***they shall rise from the dead and shall not die after, and shall receive an inheritance before the Lord, in the holy city.***
>
> …
>
> **52** Wherefore, ***for this cause preached the apostles unto the world the resurrection of the dead.***
>
> **53** ***These things are the things that ye must look for;*** and, speaking after the manner of the Lord, they are now nigh at hand, and in a time to come, even in the day of the coming of the Son of Man.
>
> **54** And until that hour there will be foolish virgins among the wise; and at that hour cometh an entire separation of the righteous and the wicked; and in that day will I send mine angels to pluck out the wicked and cast them into unquenchable fire.

So when the Lord is referring to healing a dead man he is referring to the resurrection. But not only that, we gain another bit of crucial information regarding this event (i.e., Joseph Smith's resurrection) in regard to last day timelines and prophecies. And that is found in verse 52 and 53. The Lord says here that this is the reason why the apostles preached the resurrection of the dead, for the resurrection of the dead (or more specifically the resurrection of a specific person) is "the thing that ye must look for" in the last days and this is obviously not talking about Jesus because he has been resurrected for almost 2000 years. The Lord then in the year 1831 says that these things are ***close at hand,*** speaking "after the manner of the Lord," which means it might be a while for those in 1831 to see it but that this/these resurrections were ***post*** 1831, ruling out people such as Moroni.

## Bible Tie-in

Okay, so that's what it says in The Book of Mormon, but is there a Bible tie-in? The verse directly before the prophecy in question reads:

**3 Nephi 21**

> **9** For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a ***great and a marvelous work*** among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, ***although a man shall declare it unto them.***

This not only clearly ties us back into "the marvelous work and a wonder" we are talking about in this section, it also provides the context of a man declaring things unto people and people not believing it.

**Habakkuk 1**

> **5** Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and ***wonder marvellously:*** for I will ***work*** a [a]work in your days, ***which ye will not believe, though it be told you.***
>
> **Footnote 5a: Acts 13**
>
> **41** Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I ***work*** a work in your days, a work which ***ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.***

The footnote for work here takes us back to 3 Nephi 21 and we have gone full circle… But wait, there's more!

**Luke 16 (JST)**

> **29** Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.
>
> **30** And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.
>
> **31** And he said unto him, ***If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one should rise from the dead.***

The JST changes "though one rose from the dead." To "though one ***should*** rise from the dead," a JST change that obviously changes the meaning entirely from "past resurrection" to "future"...

A massive part of the marvelous work and a wonder is tied directly to one who "should" rise from the dead who people will yet not believe, and Jesus Christ while appearing to the Saints on the ancient American continent identified that man as Joseph Smith Jr.

## Synonyms

Knowing synonyms to "healing" and "resurrection" will help us unlock further scriptures and understanding surrounding this subject.

**1 Nephi 13**

> **37** ... and if [you] endure unto the end [you] shall be ***lifted up*** at the last day, and shall be saved...

**James 4**

> **10** Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and he shall ***lift you up.***

In D&C 5:32-35 the Lord speaking to Joseph Smith said, "And now, because I foresee the lying in wait to destroy thee, yea, I foresee that if my servant Martin Harris humbleth not himself and receive a witness from my hand, that he will fall into transgression; And there are many that lie in wait to destroy thee from off the face of the earth; and for this cause, that thy days may be prolonged, I have given unto thee these commandments. Yea, for this cause I have said: Stop, and stand still until I command thee, and I will provide means whereby thou mayest accomplish the thing which I have commanded thee. And if thou art faithful in keeping my commandments, thou shalt be ***lifted up***..."

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

> **27** For notwithstanding they die, they also ***shall rise*** again, a spiritual body.
>
> **28** They who are of a celestial spirit ***shall receive the same body which was a natural body; even ye shall receive your bodies, and your glory shall be that glory by which your bodies are quickened.***
>
> **29** Ye who are quickened by a portion of the celestial glory shall then receive of the same, even a fulness.

**Doctrine and Covenants 109**

> **31** For thou knowest, O Lord, that thy servants have been innocent before thee in bearing record of thy name, ***for which they have suffered these things.***
>
> **32** Therefore we plead before thee for a full and complete deliverance from under this yoke;
>
> **33** Break it off, O Lord; break it off from the necks of thy servants, ***by thy power, that we may rise up in the midst of this generation and do thy work.***

**Hebrews 2**

> **14** Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; ***that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death,*** that is, the devil;
>
> **15** And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to ***bondage.***

**Mosiah 16**

> **7** And if Christ had not risen from the dead, or have broken the bands of death that the grave should have no victory, and that death should have no sting, there could have been no resurrection.
>
> **8** But there is a resurrection, therefore the grave hath no victory, and the sting of death is swallowed up in Christ.

Not only do we learn here that "to lift up" or "be lifted up" is synonymous with being resurrected or the resurrection, we have the Lord specifically promising Joseph that despite men laying in wait to destroy him (the "marring") that he will be lifted up. Now that we have this understanding of lifting up, we not only have yet another witness to what we have already established, but we also now have a key to better understand what the Lord was referring to whenever He references "the standard/ensign" in connection with the marvelous work and a wonder, i.e. "I will ***lift up*** my standard/ensign." It is a reference to ***the*** event that we, as Saints, are "to look for," the resurrection of Joseph Smith, him being raised up to stand as an ensign.

## Polished Shaft

**Isaiah 49**

> **1** And again: Hearken, O ye house of Israel, all ye that are broken off and are driven out because of the wickedness of the pastors of my people; yea, all ye that are broken off, that are scattered abroad, who are of my people, O house of Israel. Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken ye people from far; the Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.

Who is this servant speaking here whom the Lord knew and sanctified before he was born? Even going as far as to name him? "I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me" (Isaiah 45:5). The footnote takes you to Joseph Smith History 1:17,33,49 which are all cases where Joseph Smith was called by name. We also learn in the Book of Mormon that Joseph that was sold into Egypt prophesied saying, "A seer shall the Lord my God raise up, who shall be a choice seer unto the fruit of my loins. And his name shall be called after me; and it shall be after the name of his father" (2 Nephi 3:6,15). So this servant is Joseph Smith. But in case you are still not convinced, Joseph Smith himself says that this is him.

**Isaiah 49**

> **2** And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a ***polished shaft; in his quiver*** hath he hid me;

**Joseph Smith** identified himself as this prophet when he said:

> I am like a huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain; and the only polishing I get is when some corner gets rubbed off by coming in contact with something else, striking with accelerated force against religious bigotry, priestcraft, lawyer-craft, doctor-craft, lying editors, suborned judges and jurors, and the authority of perjured executives, backed by mobs, blasphemers, licentious and corrupt men and women—all hell knocking off a corner here and a corner there. ***Thus I will become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty,*** who will give me dominion over all and every one of them, when their refuge of lies shall fail, and their hiding place shall be destroyed, while these smooth-polished stones with which I come in contact become marred.
>
> ("The Prophet's Characterization of Himself," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 304.)

So Joseph clearly identifies himself as this servant. What do we learn next about this servant?

**Isaiah 49**

> **4** Then I said, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught and in vain; surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.
>
> **5** And now, saith the Lord—that formed me from the womb that I should be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him—though Israel be

not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.

Taking the manual and replacing every reference to Old Israel (history lesson) with Joseph Smith specifically will make it read as follows:

**(17-6) Isaiah 49:4–12. Did the Lord Forget [Joseph Smith], His Chosen [Prophet]?**

The Restoration was a long time in coming. During the years of [restoration, Joseph Smith] undoubtedly felt lonely and forsaken by the Lord. Isaiah 49:4–12 shows that loneliness. Verse 4 describes the attitude of [Joseph Smith] somewhat discouraged, yet not completely so: "I have spent my strength … in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the Lord" (Isaiah 49:4).

Nephi spoke of the [Latter-Day Saints] in their cast-off condition as being "a hiss and a byword and … hated among all nations" (1 Nephi 19:14). Isaiah 49:7 describes that condition: men despise and abhor the Lord's covenant people. But [the church] still has hope: "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I [Joseph Smith] be glorious in the eyes of the Lord" (v. 5). [Joseph Smith] will yet be raised and restored and stand as "a light to the Gentiles" and as a beacon of "salvation unto the end of the earth" (v. 6). "In an acceptable time" God will hear [the righteous remnant in the church's ] cry and "give thee ["my servant," in 1 Nephi 21:8] for a covenant of the people" (Isaiah 49:8). That began with the call of Joseph Smith, [but will not see its completeness until after Joseph Smith returns].

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 192)

At which point in time Joseph Smith will no longer be discouraged.

Going back to the chronology of Jesus in 3 Nephi:

**3 Nephi 20**

**41** And then shall a cry go forth: Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch not that which is unclean; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.

**42** For ye shall not go out with haste nor go by flight; for the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel shall be your rearward.

**3 Nephi 21**

**11** Therefore it shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words, who am Jesus Christ, which the Father shall cause [Joseph Smith] to bring forth unto the Gentiles, and shall give unto [Joseph Smith] power that he shall bring them forth unto the Gentiles, (it shall be done even as Moses said) they shall be cut off from among my people who are of the covenant.

**3 Nephi 20**

**45** So shall [Joseph Smith] sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at [Joseph Smith], for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

**3 Nephi 21**

**9** For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and a marvelous work among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them.

So once again, Joseph Smith is resurrected and he works the marvelous work and a wonder.

## Angel Flying Through the Midst of Heaven

Let us now break down a key quote from **Joseph Smith,** once again identifying himself involved in this role:

The Savior said when these tribulations should take place [Matt. 24; D&C 103:12–13; Rev. 7:14–15; etc.], it should be committed to a man who should be a witness over the whole world: the keys of knowledge, power and revelations should be revealed to a witness who should hold the testimony to the world. It has always been ***my province*** [responsibility]… Just at the time when some men think that I have no right to the keys of the Priesthood—just at that time ***I have the greatest right.***

("Interpretation of Scripture," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 364)

When the debate begins on what is and will not be Joseph Smith's calling, province, responsibility etc., he reminds us that in that moment he is the man with the greatest right.

**Continuing the quote:**

All the testimony is that the Lord in the last days would commit the keys of the Priesthood to a witness over all people. Has the Gospel of the kingdom commenced in the last days? And will God take it from the man until He takes [it] Himself?

("Interpretation of Scripture," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 364–365)

Some might suggest that the Lord took the keys from Joseph when Joseph died and therefore Joseph no longer holds the keys of this dispensation but rather the acting president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints holds the keys when Joseph comes back. However this is false.

**Doctrine and Covenants 110**

**11** After this vision closed, the heavens were again opened unto us; and Moses appeared before us, and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north.

…

**16** Therefore, ***the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands;*** and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.

**Doctrine and Covenants 90**

**3** Verily I say unto you, the keys of this kingdom ***shall never be taken from you, while thou art in the world, neither in the world to come;***

**Doctrine and Covenants 112**

**15** Exalt not yourselves; rebel not against my servant Joseph; for verily I say unto you, I am with him, and my hand shall be over him; and the keys which I have given unto him, and also to you, ***shall not be taken from him till I come.***

**Parley P. Pratt**

I bear this testimony this day, that Joseph Smith was and is a Prophet, Seer, and Revelator—an Apostle holding the keys of this last dispensation and of the kingdom of God, under Peter, James, and John. And not only that he was a Prophet and Apostle of Jesus Christ, and lived and died one, but that he now lives in the spirit world, and holds those same keys to usward and to this whole generation. Also that he will hold those keys to all eternity; and no power in heaven or on the earth will ever take them from him; for he will continue holding those keys through all eternity, and will stand—yes, again in the flesh upon this earth, as the head of the Latter-day Saints under Jesus Christ, and under Peter, James, and John. He will hold the keys to judge the generation

> to whom he was sent, and will judge my brethren that preside over me; and will judge me, together with the Apostles ordained by the word of the Lord through him and under his administration.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 5, Discourse 32, p. 195)

**Heber C. Kimball**

> Brother Joseph Smith many a time said to brother Brigham and myself and to others, that he was a representative of God to us, to teach and direct us and reprove the wrongdoers. He has past behind the veil, ***but there never will a person in this dispensation enter into the celestial glory without his approbation.***
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 5, Discourse 26, p. 119)

**William J. Critchlow, Jr.**

> And Joseph Smith can no more be "disassociated" [from the Church] than can this earth be taken out of the solar system. He was foreordained before the foundations of this earth to head this the greatest of all dispensations, the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times.
>
> ("Happiness," *Conference Report,* April 1959, p. 83)

**Praise to the Man** (Hymn 27)

> 1. Praise to the man who communed with Jehovah!
> Jesus anointed that Prophet and Seer.
> Blessed to open the last dispensation,
> Kings ***shall*** extol him, and nations revere.
> 2. Praise to his mem'ry, he died as a martyr;
> Honored and blest be his ever great name!
> Long shall his blood, which was shed by assassins,
> Plead unto heav'n while the earth lauds his fame.
> 3. Great is his glory and endless his priesthood.
> ***Ever and ever the keys he will hold.***
> Faithful and true, he will enter his kingdom,
> Crowned in the midst of the prophets of old.
> 4. Sacrifice brings forth the blessings of heaven;
> Earth must atone for the blood of that man.
> Wake up the world for the conflict of justice.
> ***Millions shall know "Brother Joseph" again.***

When will Joseph Smith be crowned among the prophets of old? When will the keys be taken from Joseph Smith, as Joseph explained, by Jesus Christ himself? The same event, Adam-ondi-ahman.

**Continuing the quote:**

> I have read it precisely as the words flowed from the lips of Jesus Christ. John the Revelator saw an angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth.
>
> ("Interpretation of Scripture," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 365)

Joseph Smith has now identified himself as John's "angel flying through the midst of heaven."

**Continuing with the quote:**

> The scripture is ready to be fulfilled…
>
> ("Interpretation of Scripture," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 365)

Joseph Smith has identified himself as this angel and then says this prophecy is ready to be fulfilled, meaning a future event. When Joseph Smith spoke those words, in 1844, the Book of Mormon was already published (Moroni), and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Days Saints was already restored and missionary work had already commenced. Firstly, Joseph Smith did not believe that this angel was Moroni or any of the angels that appeared at Kirtland Temple singularly because they appeared in the past and this event was to happen, according to Joseph Smith, in the future. So when would this happen according to Joseph Smith?

**Joseph** explains as he continues:

> "…when great wars, famines, pestilence, great distress, judgments, &c. are ready to be poured out on the inhabitants of the earth."
>
> ("Interpretation of Scripture," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 365)

Joseph here identifies the time period that this is to happen as being directly before the great wars, famines, pestilence, etc.

**Continuing the quote** once again:

> John saw the angel having the holy Priesthood, who should preach the everlasting Gospel to all nations. God had an angel—a special messenger—ordained and prepared for that purpose in the last days.
>
> ("Interpretation of Scripture," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 365)

Once again, **Joseph Smith** is identifying himself as this angel. Finishing the quote, the prophet says:

> Woe, woe be to that man or set of men who lift up their hands against God and His witness in these last days: for they shall deceive almost the very chosen ones!
>
> ("Interpretation of Scripture," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 365)

Joseph Smith is paraphrasing **3 Nephi 21:11**,

> **11** Therefore it shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words, who am Jesus Christ, which the Father shall cause [Joseph Smith] to bring forth unto the Gentiles, and shall give unto [Joseph Smith] power that [Joseph Smith] shall bring them forth unto the Gentiles, (it shall be done even as Moses said) they shall be cut off from among my people who are of the covenant.

Who are the covenant people? The very elect, the very chosen ones.

So up to this point in time, we have Jesus Christ identifying Joseph Smith as "my Servant," the ensign, etc., and Joseph identifying himself as the angel flying through the midst of heaven, and the polished shaft arrow in the Lord's quiver; whether or not you agree with this, you can't deny that Joseph thought that this was himself.

## But I Heard…

"But I heard [insert some prophet/apostle here] say that that angel flying through the midst of heaven is/was [insert any number of people here]!"

**D&C 133:17, 36. Who Was "the Angel Crying through the Midst of Heaven"?**

> The language of this verse is similar to the language of Revelation 14:6–7. **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** wrote:
>
> "Now, as to the actual work of restoration—what angel performed this mighty deed, this work which involves the salvation of all men on earth in these latter-days? Who restored the everlasting gospel? ***Was it one angel or many?***
>
> "It is traditional (and true!) to reply: 'Moroni, son of Mormon, the now resurrected Nephite prophet, who holds the keys of "the stick of Ephraim" (D. & C. 27:5), the one through whose ministry the Book of

Mormon was again brought to light.' The reasoning is that the Book of Mormon contains 'the fulness of the everlasting gospel' (D. & C. 135:3); that therein is God's message of salvation for all of earth's inhabitants; and that this gospel message is now being taken by the Lord's witnesses to one nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people after another. ...

"But other angels were yet to come—Moses, Elias, Elijah, Gabriel, Raphael, and 'divers angels, ... all declaring their dispensation, their rights, their keys, their honors, their majesty and glory, and the power of their priesthood; giving line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little.' (D. & C. 128:21.)

"Thus the angel Moroni brought the message, that is, the word; but other angels brought the keys and priesthood, the power. And in the final analysis the fulness of the everlasting gospel consists of all of the truths and powers needed to enable men to gain a fulness of salvation in the celestial heaven." (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 3:528–30.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition), 2001, p. 339)

**(16-15) Isaiah 41:2. Who Is the Righteous Man from the East?**

John saw a vision similar to Isaiah's and spoke of this righteous man as an "angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God" (Revelation 7:2). The Lord revealed to Joseph Smith that this angel of the east was "Elias which was to come to gather together the tribes of Israel and restore all things" (D&C 77:9).

Of this "angel," Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: "Who has restored all things? ***Was it one man? Certainly not.*** Many angelic ministrants have been sent from the courts of glory to confer keys and powers, to commit their dispensations and glories again to men on earth. At least the following have come: Moroni, John the Baptist, Peter, James and John, Moses, Elijah, Elias, Gabriel, Raphael, and Michael. (D. & C. 13; 110; 128:19–21.) Since it is apparent that no one messenger has carried the whole burden of the restoration, but rather that each has come with a specific endowment from on high, it becomes clear that ***Elias is a composite personage. The expression must be understood to be a name and a title for those whose mission it was to commit keys and powers to men in this final dispensation.*** (*Doctrines of Salvation,* vol. 1, pp. 170–174.)" (*Mormon Doctrine,* p. 221.)

Thus the "man from the east" seems to mean angels of the Restoration, who are grouped together under the composite title of Elias.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition), 2003, pp. 182–183)

**Wilford Woodruff**

We are living in the last dispensation. Joseph Smith, I expect, will sound the sixth trumpet. D&C 88:105 He will be at the head of this dispensation; or, if he does not blow the trumpet of this dispensation, I do not know who will. Somebody has got to do it, and it must be somebody ***holding the keys of the various dispensations of the world. No other angels are coming from any other world to administer in this dispensation; those men will minister who dwelt here in the flesh.*** [D&C 130:5]

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 21, Discourse 22, p. 189)

There are many angels who committed keys and powers to men in this final dispensation, but there is only one who is the composite, there is only one who holds all the keys of the various dispensations of the world, and there are no other angels coming nor angels coming again to commit what has already been committed, as Joseph Smith put it, "Will God take it from the man until He takes it him Himself?" Ergo, Joseph Smith Jr. is it. Period.

## Joseph Smith to Work Prudently

But will members be aware of Joseph Smith's return?

**3 Nephi 20**

**43** Behold, [Joseph Smith] shall deal ***prudently***...

**Isaiah 28**

**26** For his God doth instruct him to ***discretion,*** and doth teach him.

Synonyms for prudently and discretion include *quietly* or *discreetly,* or as Isaiah put it:

**Isaiah 42**

**1** Behold [Joseph Smith], whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon [Joseph Smith]: [Joseph Smith] shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

**2** [Joseph Smith] shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

**3** A bruised reed shall [Joseph Smith] not break, and the smoking flax shall [Joseph Smith] not quench: [Joseph Smith] shall bring forth judgment unto truth.

**4** [Joseph Smith] shall not fail nor be discouraged, till [Joseph Smith has] set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for [celestial] law.

**Brigham Young**

Will the Saints arise from the dead? Yes. Who will know it? ***But a few.*** When the resurrection commences, I say but ***few will know it;*** and allow me to inform you, when you have seen Joseph, and Hyrum, and Father Smith, and many others, risen from the dead, and you elders go abroad preaching, you will not tell the world of their resurrection, for they will not believe it.

You may testify that Father Smith has arisen, that Joseph and Hyrum again possess their bodies; that they again live in the flesh, and they will laugh you to scorn, and persecute you to the death, if they have the power, for your testimony's sake.

Will the Saints rise from the dead before the world is converted? Yes. You may despair of ever seeing all creation converted to the Lord Jesus, or to the faith of the holy gospel. Will you see the resurrection? Yes, you will be in it, and enjoy it; you will be in the first resurrection. Will the world believe it, and know of it? They will not.

(Brigham Young, October 3, 1852, *Millennial Star* 16:594 and *Deseret News,* May 11, 1854)

**Brigham Young**

As quick as Joseph finishes his mission in the spirit world ***he will be resurrected.***

I do not know that any news would come to my ears so sad and discouraging, so calculated to blight my faith and hope as to hear that Joseph is resurrected and has not made a visit to his brethren. I should know that something serious was the matter, far more than I now apprehend that there is. When his spirit again quickens his body, he will ascend to heaven, present his resurrected body to the Father and the Son, receive his commission as a resurrected being, and visit his brethren on this earth, as did Jesus after his resurrection. Mary met the Savior after his resurrection, and, "supposing him to be the gardener, saith, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him." But when she learned who he was, and was about to greet him, he said, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father." ***As quick as Joseph ascends to his Father and God, he will get a commission to this earth again,*** and I shall be the first woman that he will manifest himself to. I was

> going to say the first man, but there are so many women who profess to have seen him, that I thought I would say woman.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 4, Discourse 52, p. 285)

So Joseph Smith might be working quietly behind the scenes for awhile before he makes his appearance to the general membership of the church. But we do know what the effects are of his return.

## Testimonies

Joseph Smith shall return, that is my testimony, but am I the only one with such a testimony? Am I the only one with such knowledge and teaching such? No. Not only did Jesus Christ know and openly teach it, not only did Joseph Smith know this doctrine and openly teach it, but so did the early leaders and members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They longed for and "watered their pillow by night" wishing that they would see the day of their beloved prophet's return. I would just ask before I go into these quotes, how many members of the church today, long for Joseph's return? How many members of the church today even care if he comes back? Such members don't grasp the magnitude of the man that was the Prophet Joseph Smith. Such people would woefully, ignorantly, shamefully, put modern prophets that followed Joseph Smith in the church on the same pedestal as Joseph Smith himself. There is a reason why every prophet from Brigham Young to today has said something along the lines of, "what am I going to say to Joseph Smith?" or "Joseph Smith is your prophet," etc. All presidents of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are great men in their own rights, but all of them know that besides the Savior of the world (our Savior, who is obviously the greatest) there is no one who has come close to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

**Parley P. Pratt,** when he learned of Joseph Smith's death:

> I walked onward, weighed down as it were unto death. When I could endure it no longer, I cried out aloud, saying, "Oh, Lord, in the name of Jesus Christ I pray Thee, show me what these things mean, and what I shall say to Thy people?"
>
> Suddenly the Spirit of God came upon me, and filled my heart with joy and gladness indescribable; and while the spirit of revelation glowed in my bosom with as visible a warmth and gladness as if it were fire, the Spirit said unto me, "Lift up your head and rejoice. For behold, it is well with my servants Joseph and Hyrum. *My servant Joseph still holds the keys of my kingdom in this dispensation, and he shall stand in due time on the earth, in the flesh, and fulfill that to which he is appointed."*
>
> (*Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt,* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1938, 1970), p. 333; emphasis added.)

**Joseph Smith,** to the Nauvoo Legion in his last address:

> Those who are your friends are my friends, and I promise you *when I come again,* I will lead you forth, so that where I am you shall be with me.
>
> (*Autobiography of Wandle Mace,* typescript, BYU Special Collections, pp. 131–132; emphasis added.)

**Brigham Young**

> Joseph Smith, Junior, ***will again be on this earth dictating plans***... and he will never cease his operations, under the directions of the Son of God, until the last ones of the children of men are saved that can be, from Adam till now.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 7, Discourse 45, p. 289, October 9, 1859)
>
> There is an almighty work to perform in the spirit world. Joseph has not yet got through there. When he finishes his mission in the spirit world, he will be resurrected, but he is not yet done there. ... When his spirit again quickens his body, he will ascend to heaven, present his resurrected body to the Father and the Son, receive his commission as a resurrected being, and visit his brethren on this earth, as did Jesus after His resurrection.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 4, Discourse 52, pp. 285–286, March 15, 1857)
>
> I will refer you to a discourse I delivered here last season upon the subject of the resurrection and the Millennium... Joseph, Hyrum, Father Smith, and many others will be there to dictate and preside. Joseph will stand at the head of this dispensation and hold the keys of it, for they are not taken from him; they never were in time; they never will be in eternity. I shall be there if I live or if I die.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 6, Discourse 55, p. 308, April 8, 1853)
>
> I said to Brother Joseph, the spring before he was killed, "You are laying out work for twenty years." He replied, "You have as yet scarcely begun to work; but I will set you enough to last you during your lives, for I am going to rest." All I can do or ask now is to do the work, so that it will be right and acceptable to him ***when he comes here again.***
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 5, Discourse 55, p. 331, October 7, 1857)

**Heber C. Kimball**

> Do you suppose that if Brother Brigham were to die tomorrow, and if Joseph is resurrected, ***which he will be so soon as his mission is filled in the spirit world,*** that Joseph will permit Brother Brigham's body to remain any longer in the grave than may be requisite? No, for he then will have need of the assistance of his faithful resurrected brethren, as he now has of faithful spirits.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 4, Discourse 53, pp. 294–295, March 15, 1857)
>
> I am pretty sure of one thing—we shall go to Jackson County, Missouri; that is, those who do right and honor their callings, doing what they have been told to do. You will be blessed, and you will see the day when Presidents [Brigham] Young, [Heber C.] Kimball, and [Daniel H.] Wells, and the Twelve Apostles will be in Jackson County, Missouri, laying out your inheritances. In the flesh? Of course. We should look well without being in the flesh! We shall be there in the flesh, and all our enemies cannot prevent it. Brother Wells, you may write that. You will be there, and Willard [Richards] will be there, and also Jedediah [M. Grant], and Joseph and Hyrum Smith, and David [W. Patten], and Parley [P. Pratt]; and the day will be when I will see those men in the general assembly of the Church of the First Born, in the great council of God in Jerusalem, too. Will we want you to be along?
>
> I heard Joseph say twice that Brother Brigham and I should be in that council in Jerusalem, when there should be a uniting of the two divisions of God's government.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 9, Discourse 6, p. 27, April 7, 1861)
>
> Heber C. Kimball told the Saints in Nauvoo that "Joseph will be the first man who will rise from the dead, and then all men according to their proper order."
>
> (*History of the Church,* 7:340)

**Brigham Young**

> After the people have been tried, yes tried, then will Joseph the Prophet lead this people to Jackson County.
>
> (Letter of Amanda H. Wilcox to Susa Gates, daughter of Brigham Young, March 11, 1904, reporting a conversation with Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball in 1861, as recorded in her journal, Historical Department of the Church.)

**Brigham Young**

> If we ask who will stand at the head of the resurrection in this last dispensation, the answer is: Joseph Smith, Junior, the Prophet of God. He

is the man who will be resurrected and receive the keys of the resurrection, and he will seal this authority upon others, and they will hunt up their friends and resurrect them when they shall have been officiated for, and bring them up.

And we will have revelations to know our forefathers clear back to Father Adam and Mother Eve, and we will enter into the temples of God and officiate for them. Then man will be sealed to man until the chain is made perfect back to Adam, so that there will be a perfect chain of priesthood from Adam to the winding-up scene."

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 15, Discourse 20, pp. 138–139, August 24, 1872)

Joseph Smith holds the keys of this last dispensation, and is now engaged behind the veil in the great work of the last days. ... No man or woman in this dispensation will ever enter into the celestial kingdom of God without the consent of Joseph Smith. From the day that the priesthood was taken from the earth to the winding-up scene of all things, every man and woman must have the certificate of Joseph Smith, Junior, as a passport to their entrance into the mansion where God and Christ are...

He holds the keys of that kingdom for the last dispensation—the keys to rule in the spirit world; and he rules there triumphantly, for he gained full power and a glorious victory over the power of Satan while he was yet in the flesh, and was a martyr to his religion and to the name of Christ, which gives him a most perfect victory in the spirit world. He reigns there as supreme a being in his sphere, capacity, and calling, as God does in heaven.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 7, Discourse , p. 289, October 9, 1859)

**Orson Pratt**

The Book of Mormon is very express upon this subject. In the last chapter of the first book of Nephi, the Lord, through the Prophet, speaks concerning the building up of Zion in the latter days on the earth. He says his people should be, as it were, in great straits, at certain times, but said the Prophet, "The righteous need not fear, for I will preserve them, if it must needs be that I send down fire from heaven unto the destruction of their enemies." This will be fulfilled if necessary. Let the righteous among this people abide in their righteousness, and let them cleave unto the Lord their God; and if there are those among them who will not keep his commandments, they will be cleansed out by the judgments of which I have spoken. But if the majority of this people will be faithful, the Lord will preserve them from their enemies, from sword, pestilence and plague, and from every weapon that is lifted against them. God will shield us by his power, if we are to be led forth out of bondage as our fathers were led, at the first. This indicates that there may be bondage ahead, and that the Latter-day Saints may see severe times, and that unless we keep the commandments of God, we may be brought into circumstances that will cause our hearts to tremble within us, that is, those who are not upright before God. But if this people should be brought into bondage, as the Israelites were in ancient days, Zion must be led forth out of bondage, as Israel was at the first. In order to do this God has prophesied that he will raise up a man like unto Moses, who shall lead his people therefrom.

... This was given before our Prophet Joseph Smith was taken out of our midst. Many of us no doubt thought when that revelation was given that Joseph would be the man. I was in hopes it would be Joseph, for I had no idea that he was going to be slain, although I might have known from certain revelations that such would probably be the case, for the Lord had said unto him, before the rise of this Church, that he would grant unto him eternal life even though he should be slain, which certainly was an indication that he might be slain. But we still were in hopes that he would live and that he would be the man who, like Moses, would lead this people from bondage. I do not know but he will yet. God's arm is not shortened that he cannot raise him up even from the tomb. We are living in the dispensation of the fullness of times, the dispensation of the resurrection, and there may be some who will wake from their tombs for certain purposes and to bring to pass certain transactions on the earth decreed by the Great Jehovah; and if the Lord sees proper to bring forth that man just before the winding up scene to lead forth the army of Israel, he will do so.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 15, Discourse 45, pp. 354–366)

**Erastus Snow**

Shall we expect that the Lord Jesus is going to delay His coming in the midst of His people, until all this great work shall have been accomplished? By no means. I do not understand that He has ever intimated anything of this kind. Nor need we wait in our faith and in our expectations till all these great and glorious things shall have been accomplished on the earth before the Prophet Joseph Smith shall come unto us again. He has merely taken another mission in advance of us. He fulfilled the mission given unto him on earth. The Lord was satisfied with his labors here. He lived long enough to endow his brethren with full authority to carry on the work that he had begun on the earth. He took his departure behind the veil. The Lord suffered his enemies to destroy him in the flesh, to take away his life, and he was made an offering—what shall I say? an offering for sin. Not in the sense in which the Savior was offered, but he was made a martyr for the truth and his blood was shed to attest the testimony that he bore to the world. He entered upon another short mission. Where? Why, unto his brethren of the house of Israel, and as many of the Gentiles as will receive his testimony, behind the veil.

The mission of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, between his death and resurrection was a similar mission, but a very short one. It lasted only three days. While his body lay in the tomb his spirit visited the spirits in prison, turned the key and opened the door of their prison house, and offered unto them the Gospel of salvation. How many of them were prepared to avail themselves of it at that time? Comparatively few. But he opened the door and offered the message of life and salvation, and having done this, His fellow laborers—the Seventies, Elders and others whom He ordained to the ministry—as fast as they finished their ministry in the flesh—continued their work among the spirits in prison.

So is the Prophet Joseph Smith officiating and ministering to those spirits, and so are all His brethren, the Apostles, who have gone in his wake, who have followed, as it were, in his track. They have just gone behind the veil. Who shall we say? Let us call to mind a few of the brethren who have passed away—Brother David Patten (the first of the Apostles who was slain), Parley P. Pratt, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Hyde, Brigham Young, Orson Pratt, Charles C. Rich, and others of the Apostles; also Patriarchs Father Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith; Elders Samuel H. Smith, Don Carlos Smith—all the first Elders of this Church and the Presidents of all the early quorums, and a vast company of the members of their quorums. All these and many more are laboring in the spirit world preparing the spirits thereof to receive the benefits and blessings which are now about to be offered to them in the temples of God. In other words, "a ticket of leave" is about to be sent to them to the effect that their friends on the earth have officiated in their behalf, have complied with the ordinances which are appointed for their redemption, which will enable them to advance into a higher sphere, to walk upon a higher plane, to enter a higher class where they can be further instructed and prepared for a glorious resurrection. And as fast as this work is accomplished—and it is nigh at hand, it is now even at our doors—there will be another step made in advance; there will be another mission undertaken.

The next mission will be to come and prepare the way in Zion, and in her Stakes, and in the temples of our God for turning the key of the resurrection of the dead, to bring forth those that are asleep, and to exalt them among the Gods. And who will be first and foremost? Why, he whom God has chosen and placed first and foremost to hold the keys of this last dispensation.

> How long will it be? It is not given to me to say the month, the day, or the hour; but it is given unto me to say that that time is nigh at hand. The time is drawing near (much nearer than scarcely any of us can now comprehend) when Joseph will be clothed upon with immortality, when his brother Hyrum will be clothed upon with immortality, when the martyrs will be raised from the dead, together with their faithful brethren who have performed a good mission in the spirit world—they, too, will be called to assist in the work of the glorious resurrection. The Lord Jesus, who was the firstfruits of the dead, the firstfruit of them that sleep, and who holds the keys of the resurrection, will bring to pass the resurrection of the Prophet Joseph and his brethren, and will set them to work in bringing about the resurrection of their brethren as He has set them to work in all the other branches of the labor from the beginning.
>
> ("Near Coming of Christ, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses,* Volume 25, Discourse 5, p. 29)

**Brigham Young**

> In reference to the resurrection, ***the Latter-day Saints should understand that the man whom the Lord called in this generation and dispensation, and to whom He delivered the keys of the holy priesthood, will be the first one that will be resurrected.*** He will be the first one belonging to this dispensation who will come forth from the tomb; and then the keys of the resurrection will be given to him, and he will go forth "from conquering to conquer," and he will resurrect his brethren and commit to them the keys of the resurrection, and they will continue the work with Jesus until the whole earth is subdued, renovated and brought back into its paradisaic state and sanctified; and then until it is glorified and the Lord moves it right back into His presence where it was when it was created.
>
> ("Remarks," *Deseret News,* 9 June 1869, pp. 211–212)

**Thomas S. Monson**

> When the Savior returns to the earth in glory, the Prophet Joseph will come forth with the righteous as a resurrected being and will continue to minister under the Savior's direction. As our beloved hymn affirms, "Millions shall know 'Brother Joseph' again."
>
> (*Church News Archives,* Satellite broadcast of the Church's commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Joseph Smith, 23 Dec 2005)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

> Every prophecy about any of the great and glorious events destined to take place in the dispensation of the fulness of times is in its nature a prophecy about Joseph Smith.
>
> (*Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man*)

**Brigham Young**

> How are you going to get your resurrection? You will get it by the President of the resurrection pertaining to this generation, and that is Joseph Smith Jun. Hear it all ye ends of the earth; if ever you enter into the kingdom of God it is because Joseph Smith let you go there. This will apply to Jews and Gentiles, to the bond, and the free; to friends and foes; no man or woman in this generation will get a resurrection and be crowned, without Joseph Smith saying so. The man who was martyred in Carthage Jail, State of Illinois, holds the keys of life and death to this generation. He is the President of the resurrection in this dispensation...
>
> (An unpublished Discourse given October 8, 1854. Also found on page 99 of Eugene E. Campbell's book entitled *The Essential Brigham Young*)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

> ... we cannot specifically and definitely categorize the various spirits; ***but we do know that the noblest and the greatest and the mightiest among them were ordained to be heads of dispensations***—to be the individuals who, for their era and age and dispensation, would commence the spread of eternal truth on earth. We know, for instance, with reference to Moses, who was the head of one of these dispensations, that "there arose not another prophet ... in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face" (Deuteronomy 34:10). That sets us a pattern. We know of men like Enoch, who so lived that he perfected his whole city and his whole people, and they were translated and taken up into heaven. We look back at Abraham and consider him to be the Father of the Faithful and rejoice that we are born as his seed.
>
> There is a limited number of mighty, noble spirits who headed the respective dispensations. How many we do not know; perhaps there were eight or ten or twenty, but the number does not matter. At any rate, we soon have a small group of select individuals who stand in intelligence and power and might next to the Lord Jehovah. In the same sense that he was like unto God, these chosen and select individuals who were destined to head his work for these long ages were like unto Christ. ...
>
> That is how we rank and place the prophet Joseph Smith: he is one of the great dispensation heads, and a dispensation head is a revealer for his age and his period of the knowledge of Christ and of salvation. Thus, the other prophets of the dispensation who are associated with him and who come after him, who sustain his work and bear record of him, become witnesses that he—the chief prophet of their age—revealed the Lord Jesus and hence made salvation available.
>
> ("Joseph Smith: A Revealer of Christ," BYU Devotional Address, 3 September 1978)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

> The measure of a person's spiritual maturity is found in his or her loyalty to the Prophet Joseph Smith.
>
> (Joseph Fielding McConkie, *The Bruce R. McConkie Story: Reflections of a Son* (2003), 256. See also Bruce R. McConkie, "Joseph Smith: A Revealer of Christ," BYU Devotional Address, 3 September 1978, 6.)

# Joseph Smith to Fulfill

## Given to Another Fallacy

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> All the testimony is that the Lord in the last days would commit the keys of the Priesthood to a witness over all people. Has the Gospel of the kingdom commenced in the last days? And will God take it from the man until He takes it him Himself?
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p.364–65)

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

> **19** And all these things that the prophets might be fulfilled.

**Abraham 3**

> **17** Now, if there be two things, one above the other, and the moon be above the earth, then it may be that a planet or a star may exist above it; ***and there is nothing that the Lord thy God shall take in his heart to do but what he will do it.***
>
> **18** Howbeit that he made the greater star; as, also, ***if there be two spirits, and one shall be more intelligent than the other,*** yet these two spirits, notwithstanding one is more intelligent than the other, have no beginning; they existed before, they shall have no end, they shall exist after, for they are gnolaum, or eternal.
>
> **19** And the Lord said unto me: These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they; ***I am the Lord thy God, I am more intelligent than they all.***

**Luke 21**

> **32** Verily, I say unto you, This generation, the generation when the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, shall not pass away till all be fulfilled.
>
> **33** ***Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.***
>
> **34** ¶ Let my disciples, therefore, take heed to themselves, lest at any time their hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come upon them unawares.
>
> **35** For as a snare it shall come on all them who dwell on the face of the whole earth.

**Lectures on Faith**

> And again, the idea that he is a God of truth and cannot lie, is equally as necessary to the exercise of faith in him, as the idea of his unchangeableness. For without the idea that he was a God of truth and could not lie, the confidence necessary to be placed in his word in order to the exercise of faith in him, could not exist. But having the idea that he is not man that he can lie, it gives power to the minds of men to exercise faith in him. ...
>
> Question 19: Is it not equally as necessary that man should have an idea that God changes not, neither is there variableness with him, in order to exercise faith in him unto life and Salvation?
>
> It is; because without this, he would not know how soon the mercy of God might change into cruelty, his long suffering into rashness, his love into hatred, and in consequence of which doubt, man would be incapable of exercising faith in him, but having the idea that he is unchangeable, man can have faith in him continually, believing that what he was yesterday he is today, and will be forever. (3:21)
>
> Question 20: Is it not necessary also, for men to have an idea that God is a being of truth, before they can have perfect faith in him?
>
> It is; for unless men have this idea they cannot place confidence in his word, and not being able to place confidence in his word, they could not have faith in him; but believing that he is a God of truth, and that his word cannot fail, their faith can rest in him without doubt. (3:22)
>
> (*Lectures on Faith,* "Lecture Third: The Character of God")

**Enos 1**

> **6** And I, Enos, ***knew that God could not lie;*** wherefore, my guilt was swept away.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> And though we cannot claim these promises which were made to the ancients for they are not our property, merely because they were made to the ancient Saints, yet if we are the children of the Most High, and are called with the same calling with which they were called, and embrace the same covenant that they embraced, and are faithful to the testimony of our Lord as they were, we can approach the Father in the name of Christ as they approached Him, and for ourselves obtain the same promises. These promises, when obtained, if ever by us, will not be because Peter, John, and the other Apostles, with the churches at Sardis, Pergamos, Philadelphia, and elsewhere, walked in the fear of God, and had power and faith to prevail and obtain them; but it will be because we, ourselves, have faith and approach God in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, even as they did; and when these promises are obtained, they will be promises directly to us, or they will do us no good. They will be communicated for our benefit, ***being our own property*** (through the gift of God), earned by our own diligence in keeping His commandments and walking uprightly before Him. ***If not, to what end serves the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and why was it ever communicated to us?"***
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 65)

And that, brothers and sisters, is the crux of the whole subject—can the Lord promise blessings to a person—promises that literally become that man or woman's personal property through the gift of God—and then on a whim give those personal blessings to another when no unrighteousness was found on original person's part? If we believe that—if we believe that the Lord's word does in fact pass away, that the promises of the prophets shall not all be fulfilled, etc., and we will not have faith unto life and salvation—as Joseph Smith so clearly puts it, even the Gospel of Jesus Christ becomes moot, pointless, vain, and there was no point in the Lord ever communicating it unto us. This is crucial to understand, as there are those who wish to remove the promised blessings of Joseph Smith and to then give them to another... To whom you might ask? Well, that is one of Satan's greatest black holes, and you see, because of that, there is no answer to it! "We don't know," they say! Some unnamed Lamanite in the dark halls! Come hither, into the dark chambers and we will talk of this faceless, nameless being who will save us—who will obtain all the blessings promised to Joseph Smith Jr.!

It should come as no surprise that Satan, the real faceless, nameless being who they worship, the "Wizard of Oz behind the drape," etc. continues to try to steal the blessings, honor, etc. of both the Son of Man, ***and*** His Servant. There are but two, and shall only be two, for the words of the Lord shall not fail, and all that was promised to Joseph Smith Jr. will be fulfilled and given to Joseph Smith Jr.

**Joseph Smith's Patriarchal Blessing,** given by Oliver Cowdery (September 22, 1835)

> Preface written by Oliver Cowdery: "The reader will remember the remarks made at the commencement of the foregoing blessings, pro-

nounced by the first patriarch, and first elder in this church, Joseph Smith Jr. I said that he had authority to bless; this is so, and it may be understood that those men whose names are mentioned in the blessings by his mouth, had long been employed in the work of the Lord, and were personally known to him. I mean those besides his own family, who are myself, Frederick G. Williams, Sidney Rigdon, David Whitmer, John Whitmer, John Corrill and William W. Phelps. Now, after writing these blessings at the mouth of the Seer, I greatly desired to know the mind of the Spirit concerning this my brother, with whom I had labored so many years; And accordingly I besought the Lord with prayer and fasting, who opened the heavens upon me, ***And thus, while in the heavenly vision, I wrote the following blessing, which is a part of that which was shown and declared should come upon my brother. Therefore, let no one doubt of their correctness and truth, for they will verily be fulfilled. (signed) Oliver Cowdery."*** (*Patriarchal Blessings Book,* Volume 2:28, Church Historians Office)

Blessed of the Lord is my brother, for the integrity of his heart and the steadfastness of his soul. Upheld by the arm of the Almighty he shall never fall, but shall be strengthened by his right hand till he overcomes. ***Like Jacob of old he shall wrestle with the angel, and as a prince shall he have power with God, and shall prevail.***

Ever faithful to friends and true to his word, the goodness of the Most High shall sustain him, and thousands shall stand up to defend him from the hand of his enemies, and put forth the hand and ward off the blow were it needful: ***but ere his foes are aware he shall be hid under the pavilion of the Lord Jehovah;*** for, with the voice of his thunder shall he strike terror to their hearts, and as with the wings of an eagle shall my brother be carried beyond all harm, by the power of the Anointed.

***From amid the burning bush, like Moses of old, shall he hear the voice, saying, I am the God of thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, I have seen, I have seen, the affliction of my people and am come down to deliver them: go, thou, and say to the strength of my house, To your tents, O Israel: build up the wastes and raise up the foundation of desolation that this generation has made. Thus shall he be honored of the Lord, and thus shall it be recorded of him, that the generations to come may bless his name, in Israel, saying, The Lord make thee as Joseph the Seer, who was of the house of Ephraim, the brother of Manasseh: the Lord do thee good and bring peace and blessings upon [upon] thy house as he brought them upon the house of Joseph the Seer, who was raised up of a choice vine from the stem of Jacob through the root of Joseph, even that Joseph who was separated from his brethren—***

***For, like Joseph of old shall he be: he shall save the just from desolation, by the wise counsel of the Almighty; for by his direction shall they gather into storehouses and barns, till they overflow with the richness of the fruit of harvest: and by this means shall the just be saved from famine, while the nations of the wicked are distressed and faint.***

***In due time shall he go forth toward the north, and by the power of his word shall the deep begin to give way and the ice melt before the sun. By the keys of the Kingdom shall he lead Israel into the land of Zion while the house of Jacob shouts in the danse and in the song— Joy, O my soul, in that day, for thou shalt be with him and bear thy part in the keys which are confirmed thee for an everlasting priesthood, forever and ever— Joy, O my heart, in that day, with thanksgiving and with praise, for thou shalt stand with him before the hosts of Israel— the lame shall leap as a hart, the old shall renew his strength, and the virgin of Israel, with the youth, shall exalt the name of our God upon harps and instruments of tens[e] strings.***

***He shall be a sure arrow in the bow of his God, for he shall be hid under the shadow of his wing. His loins shall be like iron, girded by the hand of the Lord, and his feet shall be swift to execute the commandment of the Most High when he shall say, Destroy. His name shall be had in everlasting remembrance, and his name after him, for they shall be saved to the uttermost. His fame shall be sounded in foreign lands, even to the ends*** of the earth, as well as nigh at home: for in this the times shall change— a prophet shall have honor in his own country. His learning and wisdom shall astonish the great, for they shall acknowledge that by his intelligence he has far surpassed their learning and their science. In palaces of governors, rulers and kings shall he be honored, even in his person, for God shall give him power to prevail.

***He shall be a lawgiver to Israel and shall teach the house of Jacob the statutes of the Most High.*** His testimony shall shine like the sun, and the weight of his influence shall be like the great river that rises on the east of the lasting hills, and flows into the great deep— so shall his righteousness ever abound. He shall partake of the blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: the chief things of the ancient mountains, the precious things that couch beneath, and of the treasures hid in the sand.

***The records of past ages and generations, and the histories of ancient days shall he bring forth: even the record of the Nephites shall he again obtain, with all those hid up by Mormon, and others who were righteous, and many others, till he is overwhelmed with knowledge. No precious thing shall slumber from his possession, for he shall be covered with the most choice of all ages, till his soul shall be satisfied and his heart shall say, Enough, Enough!***

***In his hands shall the Urim and Thummim remain and the holy ministry, and the keys of the evangelical priesthood, also, for an everlasting priesthood forever, even the patriarchal; for, behold, he is the first patriarch in the last days. He shall sit in the great assembly and general council of patriarchs, and execute the will and commandment of God under the direction of the Ancient of Days; for he shall have his place and act in his station. Behold, my brother Joseph is blessed: blessed are all who bless him, and blessed are all those whom he blesses. Multitudes, multitudes, shall come to a knowledge of the truth through his ministry, and he shall be welcomed into the presence of kings and the great ones of the earth; for he shall claim his place among the nobles of the earth and shall be reverenced by them.***

He shall also be filled with abundance of the fat of the earth: his flocks shall bring forth thousands and tens of thousands: his fats [vats] shall overflow with wine and oil: his cattle shall increase to a multitude: he shall have horses and mules, asses, she asses and dromedaries, camels and elephants, and all swift beasts, ***and when he goes forth in haste his chariots shall roar like the approach of an army:*** he shall have gold and silver, precious stones, diamonds, pearls, and the pure platina [platinum], with the antiquities of every kind. Thus shall God bless, and thus shall he be prospered: and ***he shall have peace after a little; for his enemies shall be consumed, many of them, and many shall turn and be his friends in very deed:*** he shall remain to a good old age, even till his head is like the pure wool. Behold, there is no end to the vision, of the multiplicity of blessings and glories which shall come upon my brother Joseph. He shall possess a mansion on high and have an inheritance in that city which is like pure gold, even like transparent glass. His rest shall be glorious and his name remain forever. Thus closes the vision, and thus it shall be; even so. Amen."

(*Patriarchal Blessings Book,* Volume 2:28, Church Historians Office; *The Joseph Smith Papers,* "Blessing from Oliver Cowdery, 22 September 1835," pp. 15–16)

**1 Nephi 21**

**1** And again: Hearken, O ye house of Israel, all ye that are broken off and are driven out because of the wickedness of the pastors of my people; yea, all ye that are broken off, that are scattered abroad, who are of my people, O house of Israel. Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken ye people from far; the Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. ***(Israel is scattered and kept from the tower because of priestcraft and wickedness.)***

**2** And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;

**3** And said unto me: Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified. ***(Joseph Smith Jr. identified this as himself.)***

**4** Then I said, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught and in vain; surely myjudgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.

**5** And now, saith the Lord—that formed me from the womb that I should be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him—though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.

**6** And he said: It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth.

**7** Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nations abhorreth, to servant of rulers: Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful. ***(Joseph Smith's death and resurrection.)***

**8** Thus saith the Lord: In an acceptable time have I heard thee, O isles of the sea, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and ***I will preserve thee, and give thee my servant for a covenant of the people,*** to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; ***(Preservation and inheritances.)***

**9** That thou mayest say to the prisoners: Go forth; to them that sit in darkness: Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. ***(Keys of resurrection and return of the ten tribes.)***

**10** They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor the sun smite them; for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them. ***(Preserve from famine.)***

**11** And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted.

**12** And then, O house of Israel, behold, these shall come from far; and lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim.

**13** Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; for the feet of those who are in the east shall be established; and break forth into singing, O mountains; for they shall be smitten no more; for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. ***(Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem.)***

We will be going over these items (and more) in this chapter.

## I. Adam-ondi-Ahman (Priesthood Meeting)

**President John Taylor**

A great council will then be held to adjust the affairs of the world, from the commencement, over which Father Adam will preside as head and representative of the human family. ...

Then they will assemble to regulate all these affairs, and ***all that held keys of authority to administer will then represent their earthly course.*** And ***as this authority has been handed down*** from one to another in different ages, and in different dispensations, a full reckoning will have to be made ***by all. All who have held the keys of priesthood*** will then have to give an account to those from whom they received them. Those that were in the heavens have been assisting those that were upon the earth; but then, ***they will unite together*** in a general council to give an account of their stewardships, and as in the various ages men have received their power to administer from those who had previously held the keys thereof, there will be a general account.

Those under the authorities of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have to give an account of their transactions to those who direct them in the priesthood; hence the elders give an account to presidents of conferences; and presidents of conferences to presidents of nations. Those presidents and the seventies give an account to the twelve apostles; the twelve to the First Presidency; ***and they to Joseph,*** from whom they, and the twelve, received their priesthood. This will include the arrangements of the last dispensation. ***Joseph delivers his authority to Peter,*** who held the keys before him, and delivered them to him; and Peter to Moses and Elias, who endowed him with this authority on the Mount; and they to those from whom they received them. And thus the world's affairs will be regulated and put right, ***the restitution of all things be accomplished, and the kingdom of God be ushered in.***

(*The Gospel Kingdom,* p. 217)

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

This gathering of the children of Adam, where the thousands, and the tens of thousands are assembled in the judgment, will be one of the greatest events this troubled earth has ever seen. At this conference, or council, ***all who have held keys of dispensations will render a report of their stewardship.*** ... We do not know how long a time this gathering will be in session, ***or how many sessions will be held at this grand council.*** It is sufficient to know that it is a gathering of the Priesthood of God ***from the beginning of this earth down to the present,*** in which reports will be made and ***all who have been given dispensations (talents) will declare their keys and ministry and make report of their stewardship according to the parable (the parable of the talents; Matthew 25).*** Judgment will be rendered unto them for this is a gathering of the righteous. ... It is not to be the judgment of the wicked. ... ***This will precede the great day of destruction of the wicked and will be the preparation for the Millennial Reign.***

(*The Progress of Man*, pp. 481–82; see also Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Way to Perfection*, pp. 288–91. Also found in *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Seminary Teacher Manual,* Lesson 123)

**D&C 133: 20–22. What Appearances will the Lord Make?**

Elder Charles W. Penrose explained that Christ will make several appearances, namely, to the Saints gathered to Zion, to the Jews gathered back to their homeland, and to the rest of the world:

"Among the first-mentioned of these three classes of men [that is, among the Saints in Zion] the Lord will make his appearance first; and that appearance will be unknown to the rest of mankind. He will come to the Temple prepared for him, and his faithful people will behold his face, hear his voice, and gaze upon his glory. ***From his own lips they will receive further instructions for the development and beautifying of Zion and for the extension and sure stability of his kingdom."***

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition), 2001, p. 340)

**D&C 116:1. What Is the Purpose of the Council at Which Adam Will Preside?**

Elder Joseph Fielding Smith said that the council at Adam-ondi-Ahman, as prophesied in Daniel 7:9-14, will be "of the greatest importance to this world. At that time ***there will be a transfer of authority from the usurper and impostor, Lucifer, to the rightful King, Jesus Christ.*** Judgment will be set and ***all who have held keys will make their reports and deliver their stewardships,*** as they shall be required. Adam will direct this judgment, and then he will make his report, as the one holding the keys for this earth, to his Superior Officer, Jesus Christ. ***Our Lord will then assume the reins of government;*** directions will be given to the Priesthood; and He, whose right it is to rule, will be installed officially by the voice of the Priesthood there assembled. This grand council of Priesthood will be composed, not only of those who are faithful who now dwell on this earth, ***but also of the prophets and apostles of old, who have had directing authority.*** Others may also be there, but if so they will be there by appointment, for this is to be an official council called to attend to the most momentous matters concerning the destiny of this earth.

"When this gathering is held, the world will not know of it; the members of the Church at large will not know of it, yet it shall be preparatory to the coming in the clouds of glory of our Savior Jesus Christ as

> the Prophet Joseph Smith has said. The world cannot know of it. The Saints cannot know of it-except those who officially shall be called into this council-for it shall precede the coming of Jesus Christ as a thief in the night, unbeknown to all the world." (*Way to Perfection,* pp. 290–91.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition), 2001, p. 288)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Daniel in his seventh chapter speaks of the Ancient of Days; he means the oldest man, our Father Adam, Michael, he will call his children together and hold ***a council with them to prepare them for the coming of the Son of Man.*** He (Adam) is the father of the human family, and presides over the spirits of all men, and ***all that have had the keys must stand before him in this grand council.*** This may take place before some of us leave this stage of action. The Son of Man stands before him, and there is given him glory and dominion. Adam delivers up his stewardship to Christ, that which was delivered to him as holding the keys of the universe, but retains his standing as head of the human family.
>
> ("Adam the Oldest Man," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 157)

Clearly, Joseph Smith Jr. will be at this event. Those that have not bodies cannot transfer keys (this is the reason for translations of people such as Moses, Elias, etc. before the resurrection of Christ on the Mt. of Transfiguration), which means, clearly, that Joseph Smith Jr. has to be resurrected ***before*** said event. This is why I believe going over this event first is the most important, for if we remember from the Macro Last-day Timeline Introduction:

FUTURE
1st Those at Adam-ondi-Ahman (see Doctrine and Covenants 27:5–14; 116:1)
2nd Those in New Jerusalem in America (see Doctrine and Covenants 45:66–67)
3rd The Jews in Jerusalem (see Doctrine and Covenants 45:48, 51–53)
4th The whole world at the Second Coming (see Doctrine and Covenants 101:23)

("He Is Risen: Who Saw and Will See the Resurrected Christ," *Liahona,* April 2021)

If one understands that Joseph Smith Jr. has to come back and be resurrected for Adam-ondi-Ahman, and they also understand that the events at Adam-ondi-Ahman take place ***before*** the events at New Jerusalem and ***before*** the events of old Jerusalem and ***before*** the events of the Great and Dreadful day, they can start to more easily and fully grasp the central role Joseph Smith plays in his return for these events.

## II. Keys of the Resurrection

**Brigham Young**

> If we ask who will stand at the head of the resurrection in this last dispensation, the answer is: Joseph Smith, Junior, the Prophet of God. He is the man who will be resurrected and receive the keys of the resurrection, and he will seal this authority upon others, and they will hunt up their friends and resurrect them when they shall have been officiated for, and bring them up.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 15, pp. 138–139)

**Heber C. Kimball**

> Do you suppose that if Brother Brigham were to die tomorrow, and if Joseph is resurrected, ***which he will be so soon as his mission is filled in the spirit world,*** that Joseph will permit Brother Brigham's body to remain any longer in the grave than may be requisite? No, for he then will have need of the assistance of his faithful resurrected brethren, as he now has of faithful spirits.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 4, Discourse 53, pp. 294–295)
>
> I am pretty sure of one thing—we shall go to Jackson County, Missouri; that is, those who do right and honor their callings, doing what they have been told to do. You will be blessed, and you will see the day when Presidents [Brigham] Young, [Heber C.] Kimball, and [Daniel H.] Wells, and the Twelve Apostles will be in Jackson County, Missouri, laying out your inheritances. ***In the flesh? Of course.*** We should look well without being in the flesh! We shall be there in the flesh, and all our enemies cannot prevent it.
>
> Brother Wells, you may write that. You will be there, and Willard [Richards] will be there, and also Jedediah [M. Grant], and ***Joseph and Hyrum Smith,*** and David [W. Patten], and Parley [P. Pratt]; and the day will be when I will see those men in the general assembly of the Church of the First Born, in the great council of God in Jerusalem, too. Will we want you to be along? I heard Joseph say twice that Brother Brigham and I should be in that council in Jerusalem, when there should be a uniting of the two divisions of God's government."
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 9, Discourse 6, p. 27)
>
> Heber C. Kimball told the Saints in Nauvoo that "Joseph will be the first man who will rise from the dead, and then all men according to their proper order."
>
> (*History of the Church,* 7:340)

**Brigham Young**

> Will the Saints arise from the dead? Yes. Who will know it? But a few. When the resurrection commences, I say but few will know it; and allow me to inform you, when you have seen Joseph, and Hyrum, and Father Smith, and many others, risen from the dead, and you elders go abroad preaching, you will not tell the world of their resurrection, for they will not believe it.
>
> You may testify that Father Smith has arisen, that Joseph and Hyrum again possess their bodies; that they again live in the flesh, and they will laugh you to scorn, and persecute you to the death, if they have the power, for your testimony's sake.
>
> Will the Saints rise from the dead ***before the world is converted?*** Yes. You may despair of ever seeing all creation converted to the Lord Jesus, or to the faith of the holy gospel. Will you see the resurrection? Yes, you will be in it, and enjoy it; you will be in the first resurrection. Will the world believe it, and know of it? They will not.
>
> (October 3, 1852, *Millennial Star* 16:594 and *Deseret News,* May 11, 1854)

**D&C 63**

> **47** He that is faithful and endureth shall overcome the world.
>
> **48** He that sendeth up treasures unto the land of Zion shall receive an inheritance in this world, and his works shall follow him, and also a reward in the world to come.
>
> **49** Yea, and blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth, when the Lord shall come, and old things shall pass away, and all things become new, ***they shall rise from the dead and shall not die after, and shall receive an inheritance before the Lord, in the holy city.***
>
> **52** Wherefore, for this cause preached the apostles unto the world the resurrection of the dead.
>
> **53** ***These things are the things that ye must look for;*** and, speaking after the manner of the Lord, they are now nigh at hand, and in a time to come, even in the day of the coming of the Son of Man.
>
> **54** And until that hour there will be foolish virgins among the wise; and at that hour cometh an entire separation of the righteous and the wicked; and in that day will I send mine angels to pluck out the wicked and cast them into unquenchable fire.

Drawing attention, once again, to verses 52 and 53. The Lord says here that this is the reason why the apostles preached the resurrection of the dead, for the resurrection of the dead (or more specifically the resurrec-

tion of a specific person) is "the thing that ye must look for" in the last days and this is obviously not talking about Jesus because he has been resurrected for almost 2000 years. This is talking about Joseph Smith Jr. who will hold the keys of the resurrection.

**Elder Erastus Snow**

> Brother David Patten (the first of the Apostles who was slain), Parley P. Pratt, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Hyde, Brigham Young, Orson Pratt, Charles C. Rich, and others of the Apostles; also Patriarchs Father Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith; Elders Samuel H. Smith, Don Carlos Smith—all the first Elders of this Church and the Presidents of all the early quorums, and a vast company of the members of their quorums. All these and many more are laboring in the spirit world preparing the spirits thereof to receive the benefits and blessings which are now about to be offered to them in the temples of God. In other words, "a ticket of leave" is about to be sent to them to the effect that their friends on the earth have officiated in their behalf, have complied with the ordinances which are appointed for their redemption, which will enable them to advance into a higher sphere, to walk upon a higher plane, to enter a higher class where they can be further instructed and prepared for a glorious resurrection. And as fast as this work is accomplished—and it is nigh at hand, it is now even at our doors—there will be another step made in advance; there will be another mission undertaken. The next mission will be to come and prepare the way in Zion, and in her Stakes, and in the temples of our God ***for turning the key of the resurrection of the dead,*** to bring forth those that are asleep, and to exalt them among the Gods.
>
> And who will be first and foremost? Why, he whom God has chosen and placed first and foremost to hold the keys of this last dispensation. How long will it be? It is not given to me to say the month, the day, or the hour; but it is given unto me to say that that time is nigh at hand. The time is drawing near (much nearer than scarcely any of us can now comprehend) when Joseph will be clothed upon with immortality, when his brother Hyrum will be clothed upon with immortality, when the martyrs will be raised from the dead, together with their faithful brethren who have performed a good mission in the spirit world—they, too, will be called to assist in the work of the glorious resurrection. The Lord Jesus, who was the firstfruits of the dead, the firstfruit of them that sleep, 1 Cor. 15:20 ***and who holds the keys of the resurrection, will bring to pass the resurrection of the Prophet Joseph and his brethren, and will set them to work in bringing about the resurrection of their brethren as He has set them to work in all the other branches of the labor from the beginning."***
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 25, Discourse 5, p. 29)

**Brigham Young**

> How are you going to get your resurrection? You will get it by the President of the resurrection pertaining to this generation, and that is Joseph Smith Jun. Hear it all ye ends of the earth; if ever you enter into the kingdom of God it is because Joseph Smith let you go there. This will apply to Jews and Gentiles, to the bond, and the free; to friends and foes; no man or woman in this generation will get a resurrection and be crowned, without Joseph Smith saying so. The man who was martyred in Carthage Jail, State of Illinois, holds the keys of life and death to this generation. He is the President of the resurrection in this dispensation...
>
> (An unpublished Discourse given October 8, 1854. Also found on page 99 of Eugene E. Campbell's book entitled *The Essential Brigham Young*)

## III. Discern

**3 Nephi 21**

> **10** But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them. Yet I will heal him, for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.
>
> **11** Therefore it shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words, who am Jesus Christ, which the Father shall cause [Joseph Smith] to bring forth unto the Gentiles, and shall give unto [Joseph Smith] power that he shall bring them forth unto the Gentiles, (it shall be done even as Moses said) ***they shall be cut off from among my people who are of the covenant.***

**3 Nephi 24**

> **1** And it came to pass that he commanded them that they should write the words which the Father had given unto Malachi, which he should tell unto them. And it came to pass that after they were written he expounded them. And these are the words which he did tell unto them, saying: Thus said the Father unto Malachi—Behold, ***I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me,*** and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even ***the messenger of the covenant,*** whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. ...
>
> **18** Then shall ye ***return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.***

**2 Nephi 25**

> **4** ***Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant,*** which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

**Elder Heber C. Kimball**

> Then the Prophet Joseph and others will make their appearance ***and those who have remained faithful will be selected*** to return to Jackson County, Missouri and take part in the building of that beautiful city, the New Jerusalem.
>
> (*Conference Report,* October 1930, pp. 58–59)

**Jesus Christ**

> There has been a day of calling, but the time has come for a day of choosing; and let those be chosen that are worthy. And ***it shall be manifest unto my servant, by the voice of the Spirit, those that are chosen; and they shall be sanctified;*** And inasmuch as they follow the counsel which they receive, they shall have power after many days to accomplish all things pertaining to Zion. ...
>
> ***Behold, I, the Lord, will give unto my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., power that he shall be enabled to discern by the Spirit those who shall go up unto the land of Zion, and those of my disciples who shall tarry.***
>
> (Doctrine and Covenants 105:35–37, 63:41)

**Joseph Smith's Steamboat Dream**

> In early February 1844, four months prior to his death, Joseph Smith had a dream, which he related to Wilford Woodruff, Willard Richards, and W. W. Phelps. He stated, "I was standing on a peninsula, in the midst of a vast body of water where there appeared to be a large harbor or pier built out for boats to come to. I was surrounded by my friends, and while looking at this harbor I saw a steamboat approaching the harbor. There were bridges on the pier for persons to cross, and there came up a wind and drove the steamboat under one of the bridges and upset it. I ran up to the boat, expecting the persons would all drown; and wishing to do something to assist them, I put my hand against the side of the boat, and with one surge I shoved it under the bridge and righted it up, and then told them to take care of themselves. But it was not long before I saw them starting out into the channel or main body of the water again. The storms were raging and the waters rough. ***I said to my friends that if they did not understand the signs of the times and the spirit of prophecy, they would be apt to be lost. It was but a few moments after when we saw the waves break over the boat, and she soon foundered and went down with all on board.*** The storm and wa-

ters were still very rough; yet I told my friends around me that I believed I could stem those waves and that storm, and swim in the waters better than the steamboat did; at any rate I was determined to try it.

(*History of the Church,* 6:194–95)

## IV. Redemption of Zion

**D&C 101**

**55** And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;

**56** And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard; for it is mine; I have bought it with money.

**57** Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen.

**58** And inasmuch as they gather together against you, avenge me of mine enemies, that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land.

**Doctrine and Covenants 103**

**15** Behold, I say unto you, the redemption of Zion must needs come by power;

**16** Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel.

**17** For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ye must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm.

**18** And as your fathers were led at the first, even so shall the redemption of Zion be.

**19** Therefore, let not your hearts faint, for I say not unto you as I said unto your fathers: Mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence.

**20** But I say unto you: Mine angels shall go up before you, and also my presence, and in time ye shall possess the goodly land.

**21** Verily, verily I say unto you, ***that my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., is the man to whom I likened the servant to whom the Lord of the vineyard spake in the parable which I have given unto you.***

**22** ***Therefore let my servant Joseph Smith,*** Jun., say unto the strength of my house, my young men and the middle aged—Gather yourselves together unto the land of Zion, upon the land which I have bought with money that has been consecrated unto me.

**23** And let all the churches send up wise men with their moneys, and purchase lands even as I have commanded them.

**24** And inasmuch as mine enemies come against you to drive you from my goodly land, which I have consecrated to be the land of Zion, even from your own lands after these testimonies, which ye have brought before me against them, ye shall curse them;

**25** And whomsoever ye curse, I will curse, and ye shall avenge me of mine enemies.

**26** And my presence shall be with you even in avenging me of mine enemies, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.

**Doctrine and Covenants 103:21–28. The Lord commands the Prophet Joseph Smith to go to Zion**

In December 1833 the Lord revealed a parable regarding the redemption of the land of Zion. In that parable "a certain nobleman" had his servants plant 12 olive trees on a "very choice piece of land" (D&C 101:44). He commanded his servants to "set watchmen round about them, and build a tower, that one may overlook the land" and protect it from the enemy (D&C 101:45). However, the servants did not complete the tower, and the enemy "came by night, and … destroyed their works, and broke down the olive-trees" (see D&C 101:46–51). The nobleman, the Lord of the vineyard, then said to one of his servants, "Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, … and go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard" (D&C 101:55–56).

In the revelation recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 103, ***the Lord identified the Prophet Joseph Smith as the servant in the parable who would "redeem," or reclaim, the vineyard*** (see D&C 103:21).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual,* 2018)

**Blessing given by Joseph Smith Sr.** (January 23, 1833)

… The presidency then took the seat in their turn, according to their age, beginning at the eldest, and received their anointing and blessing under the hand, of father Smith; and in my turn ***my father anointed my head, and sealed upon me the blessings of Moses, to lead Israel in the latter Days, even as Moses led him in days of old; also the blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.*** All of the Presidency laid th[e]ir hands upon me, and pronounced upon my head many prophecies, and blessings, many of which I shall not notice at this time.

(*History of the Church,* 2:379–80; *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 353)

**Joseph Smith's Dilapidated Barn Dream**

Joseph Smith's last dream occurred on June 26, 1844 while he was in the Carthage Jail, the last night of the Prophet's life. He was killed the next day, June 27. The Prophet Joseph stated, "I was back in Kirtland, Ohio, and thought I would take a walk out by myself, and view my old farm, which I found grown up with weeds and brambles, and altogether bearing evidence of neglect and want of culture. I went into the barn, which I found without floor or doors, with the weather-boarding off, and was altogether in keeping with the farm. While I viewed the desolation around me, and was contemplating how it might be recovered from the curse upon it, there came rushing into the barn a company of furious men, who commenced to pick a quarrel with me. The leader of the party ordered me to leave the barn and farm, stating it was none of mine, and that I must give up all hope of ever possessing it. I told him the farm was given me by the Church, and although I had not had any use of it for some time back, still I had not sold it, and according to righteous principles it belonged to me or the Church. He then grew furious and began to rail upon me, and threaten me, and said it never did belong to me nor to the Church. I then told him that I did not think it worth contending about, that I had no desire to live upon it in its present state, and if he thought he had a better right I would not quarrel with him about it but leave; but my assurance that I would not trouble him at present did not seem to satisfy him, as he seemed determined to quarrel with me, and threatened me with destruction of my body. While he was thus engaged, pouring out his bitter words upon me, a rabble rushed in and nearly filled the barn, drew out their knives, and began to quarrel among themselves for the premises, and for a moment forgot me, at which time I took the opportunity to walk out of the barn about up to my ankles in mud. When I was a little distance from the barn, I heard them screeching and screaming in a very distressed manner, as it appeared they had engaged in a general fight with their knives. While they were thus engaged, the dream or vision ended.

(*History of the Church,* 6:609–10)

**Blessing given by Joseph Smith Sr.** (December 9, 1834)

Joseph, my son, I lay my hands upon thy head in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to confirm upon thee a father's blessing. …

I bless thee with the blessings of thy fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and even the blessings of thy father Joseph, the son of Jacob. Behold, he looked after his posterity in the last days, ***when they should be scattered and driven by the Gentiles, and wept before the Lord: he sought***

***diligently to know from whence the son should come who should bring forth the word of the Lord, by which they might be enlightened, and brought back to the true fold, and his eyes beheld thee, my son: his heart rejoiced and his soul was satisfied, and he said,***

"As my blessings are to extend to the utmost bounds of the everlastings hills; as my father's blessing prevailed above the blessings of his progen[i]tors, and as my branches are to run over the wall, and my seed are to inherit the choice land whereon the Zion of God shall stand in the last days, from among my seed, scattered with the Gentiles, shall a choice Seer arise whose bowels shall be as a fountain of truth, whose loins shall be girded with the girdle of righteousness, whose hands shall be lifted with acceptance before the God of Jacob to turn away his anger from his annointed, whose heart shall meditate great wisdom, whose intelligence shall circumscribe and comprehend the deep things of God, and whose mouth shall utter the law of the just: ***His feet shall stand upon the neck of his enemies, and he shall walk upon the ashes of those who seek his destruction:*** with wine and oil it shall he be sustained, and he shall feed upon the heritage of Jacob his father: the just shall desire his society, and the upright in heart shall be his companions: ***No weapon formed against him shall prosper, and though the wicked mar him for a little season, he shall be like one rising up in the heat of wine—he shall roar in his strength, and the Lord shall put to flight his persecutors:*** he shall be blessed like the fruitful olive, and his memory shall be as sweet as the choice cluster of the first ripe grapes. Like a shief [sheaf] fully ripe, gathered into the garner, so shall he stand before the Lord, having produced a hundred fold."

***Thus spake my father Joseph. Therefore, my son, I know for a surety that these things will be fulfilled, and I confirm upon thee all these blessings. Thou shalt live to do the work which the Lord shall command thee: thou shalt hold the keys of this ministry, even the presidency of this church, both in time and in eternity.***

Thy heart shall be enlarged, and thou shalt be able to fill up the measure of thy days according to the will of the Lord.

***Thou shalt speak the word of the Lord and the earth shall tremble; the mountains shall move and the rivers shall turn out of their course. Thou shalt escape the edge of the sword, and put to flight the armies of the wicked.***

At thy word the lame shall walk, the deaf shall hear and the blind shall see.

***Thou shalt be gathered to Zion and in the goodly land thou shalt enjoy thine inheritance;*** thy children and thy children's children to the latest generation; for thy name and the names of thy posterity shall be recorded in the book of the Lord, even in the book of blessings genealogies, for their joy and benefit forever.

And now, my son, what more shall I say? Thou art as a fruitful olive and a choice vine: thou shalt be laden with precious fruit. Thousands and tens of thousands shall come to a knowledge of the truth through thy ministry, and thou shalt rejoice with them in the Celestial Kingdom:

***Thou shalt stand upon the earth when it shall reel to and fro as a drunken man, and be removed out of its place: thou shalt stand when the mighty judgments go forth to the destruction of the wicked: thou shalt stand on mount Zion when the tribes of Jacob come shouting from the north, and with thy brethren, the sons of Ephraim, crown them in the name of Jesus Christ:***

***Thou shalt see thy Redeemer Come in the clouds of heaven, and with the just receive the hallowed throng with shouts of hallalujahs, praise the Lord.*** Amen.

(*The Joseph Smith Papers,* "Blessing from Joseph Smith Sr.," 9 Dec. 1834)

**Blessing given by Joseph Smith Sr.** (January 23, 1833)

... The presidency then took the seat in their turn, according to their age, beginning at the eldest, and received their anointing and blessing under the hand, of father Smith; and in my turn ***my father anointed my head, and sealed upon me the blessings of Moses, to lead Israel in the latter Days, even as Moses led him in days of old; also the blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.*** All of the Presidency laid th[e]ir hands upon me, and pronounced upon my head many prophecies, and blessings, many of which I shall not notice at this time.

(*History of the Church,* 2:379–80; *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 353)

## V. Inheritances

**Heber C. Kimball**

I am pretty sure of one thing—***we shall go to Jackson County, Missouri; that is, those who do right and honor their callings, doing what they have been told to do.*** You will be blessed, and you will see the day when Presidents [Brigham] Young, [Heber C.] Kimball, and [Daniel H.] Wells, and the Twelve Apostles ***will be in Jackson County, Missouri, laying out your inheritances. In the flesh? Of course.*** We should look well without being in the flesh! We shall be there in the flesh, and all our enemies cannot prevent it.

Brother Wells, you may write that. You will be there, and Willard [Richards] will be there, and also Jedediah [M. Grant], ***and Joseph and Hyrum Smith,*** and David [W. Patten], and Parley [P. Pratt]; and the day will be when I will see those men in the general assembly of the Church of the First Born, in the great council of God in Jerusalem, too. Will we want you to be along? I heard Joseph say twice that Brother Brigham and I should be in that council in Jerusalem, when there should be a uniting of the two divisions of God's government.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 9, p. 27)

**Blessing given by Joseph Smith Sr.** (September 14, 1840)

As recorded by Lucy Mack Smith, mother of the Prophet Joseph Smith:

My husband commenced vomitting blood. I sent immediately for Joseph and Hyrum; who as soon as they came, gave him something to alleviate his distress. This was saturday night. The next morning Joseph came in and told his father, that he should not be troubled any more for the present with the Missourians: "and," said he, "I can now stay with you as much as you wish."

... ***To Joseph he said: Joseph, my son; thou art called to an high and holy calling— thou art even called to do the work of the Lord— hold out faithful and you shall be blessed, and your children after you— you shall even live to finish your work."—[At this Joseph cried out, weeping "Oh my father will I]—"Yes, said his father, "you shall live to lay out the plan of all the work which, which God has given you to do. This is my dying blessing on your head in the name of Jesus— I also confirm your former blessings upon your head; for it shall be fulfilled, even so. Amen."***

(*Lucy Mack Smith, History,* 1845, pp. 296–98)

**Brigham Young**

Joseph Smith holds the keys of this last dispensation, and is now engaged behind the veil in the great work of the last days. I can tell our beloved brother Christians who have slain the Prophets and butchered and otherwise caused the death of thousands of Latter-day Saints, the priests who have thanked God in their prayers and thanksgiving from the pulpit that we have been plundered, driven, and slain, and the deacons under the pulpit, and their brethren and sisters in their closets, who have thanked God, thinking that the Latter-day Saints were wasted away, something that no doubt will mortify them—something that, to say the least, is a matter of deep regret to them—namely, that no man or woman in this dispensation will ever enter into the celestial kingdom of God without the consent of Joseph Smith. From the day that the Priesthood was taken from the earth to the winding-up scene of all things, every man and woman must have the certificate

of Joseph Smith, junior, as a passport to their entrance into the mansion where God and Christ are—I with you and you with me. I cannot go there without his consent. He holds the keys of that kingdom for the last dispensation—the keys to rule in the spirit world; and he rules there triumphantly, for he gained full power and a glorious victory over the power of Satan while he was yet in the flesh, and was a martyr to his religion and to the name of Christ, which gives him a most perfect victory in the spirit world. He reigns there as supreme a being in his sphere, capacity, and calling, as God does in heaven. Many will ex claim—"Oh, that is very disagreeable! It is preposterous! We cannot bear the thought!" But it is true.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 7, p. 45)

**Heber C. Kimball**

Brother Joseph Smith many a time said to brother Brigham and myself and to others, that he was a representative of God to us, to teach and direct us and reprove the wrongdoers. He has past behind the veil, ***but there never will a person in this dispensation enter into the celestial glory without his approbation.***

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 5, p. 119)

**Orson Pratt**

The Lord said in that revelation that the principle which he had revealed in relation to the properties of his Church must be carried out to the very letter upon the land of Zion; and those individuals who would not give heed to it, but sought to obtain their inheritances in an individual way by purchasing it themselves from the Government, should have their names blotted out from the book of the names of the righteous, and if their children pursued the same course their names should be blotted out too, they and their children should not be known in the book of the law of the Lord as being entitled to an inheritance among the Saints in Zion.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 15, p. 354)

**Doctrine and Covenants Section 85**

*… 6–12, One mighty and strong will give the Saints their inheritance in Zion.*

**6** Yea, thus saith the still small voice, which whispereth through and pierceth all things, and often times it maketh my bones to quake while it maketh manifest, saying:

**7** And it shall come to pass that I, the Lord God, will send one mighty and strong, holding the scepter of power in his hand, clothed with light for a covering, whose mouth shall utter words, eternal words; while his bowels shall be a fountain of truth, to set in order the house of God, ***and to arrange by lot the inheritances of the saints whose names are found,*** and the names of their fathers, and of their children, enrolled in the book of the law of God;

**8** While that man, who was called of God and appointed, that putteth forth his hand to steady the ark of God, shall fall by the shaft of death, like as a tree that is smitten by the vivid shaft of lightning.

**9** And ***all they who are not found written in the book of remembrance shall find none inheritance in that day, but they shall be cut asunder, and their portion shall be appointed them among unbelievers, where are wailing and gnashing of teeth.***

**10** These things I say not of myself; therefore, as the Lord speaketh, he will also fulfil.

**11** And they who are of the High Priesthood, whose names are not found written in the book of the law, or that are found to have apostatized, or to have been cut off from the church, as well as the lesser priesthood, or the members, in that day shall not find an inheritance among the saints of the Most High;

**12** Therefore, it shall be done unto them as unto the children of the priest, as will be found recorded in the second chapter and sixty-first and second verses of Ezra.

**3 Nephi 24**

**16** Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard; ***and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.***

**17** ***And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.***

**18** Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

And thus, for this dispensation of grace, we come to Joseph Smith. He was called of God to reveal anew the doctrines of salvation. He was called of God to stand as the Lord's legal administrator, dispensing salvation to all men—repeat: all men—in the last days. Christ is the True Vine; Joseph Smith is the chief branch for our day. …

And thus, all men—every living soul who has lived or shall live on earth between the spring of 1820 and that glorious future day when the Son of God shall return to reign personally on earth—***all men in the latter days must turn to Joseph Smith to gain salvation.*** Why? The answer is clear and plain; let it be spoken with seven thunders. He alone can bring them the gospel; he alone can perform for them the ordinances of salvation and exaltation; he stands, as have all the prophets of all the ages in their times and seasons, in the place and stead of the Heavenly One in administering salvation to men on earth.

(*Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man*)

## VI. Reveal

There is nothing greater that Joseph Smith was promised to reveal than that of the "Sealed Portion of the Book of Mormon," and there is no better way to understand this than by breaking down 2 Nephi 27 and "hear Him" teach us the order of these events clearly.

**2 Nephi 27**

**5** For behold, the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep. For behold, ye have closed your eyes, and ye have rejected the prophets; and your rulers, and the seers hath he covered because of your iniquity.

**6** And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall bring forth unto you the words of a book, and they shall be the words of them which have slumbered.

There are many who teach this as referring to the Book of Mormon, just like many who believe Moses 7:62 refers to the Book of Mormon. However, both of those interpretations as being the Book of Mormon are incomplete and don't make sense in the context. Let's keep reading and see if we can find the context we are looking for.

**2 Nephi 27**

**7** And behold the book…

What book? This is saying "the book that will come forth at that time," so if you believe that this refers to the Book of Mormon let's keep reading and see if that continues to make sense.

**10** …shall be sealed; and in the book shall be a revelation from God, ***from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof.***

Is the Book of Mormon the translation of the sealed portion? Is the Book of Mormon an account from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof? The answer to both of these ***is no.*** This is referring to ***the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon*** and the Lord here is describing the time period ***it*** will come forth. The "Bible" as we have it, starts in Genesis and ends in Revelation—many would say "an account from the begin-

ning of the world (Genesis) to the ending thereof (Revelation)." We further learn key bits of information about this sealed portion ***when it goes forth*** in 2 Nephi 28–29. We learn that even the Saints of God will say, "We have received the word of God, and we need no more of the word of God, for we have enough!" And we learn in 2 Nephi 29:3–6 that many of the Gentiles will cry, "A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible." The sealed portion for all intents and purposes can be viewed as ***an upgraded and complete Bible,*** the Book of Mormon is not. When we get the sealed portion, for all intents and purposes, it will replace the Bible ***as the definitive source from the creation to the end of the world to the end thereof (Genesis to Revelation).***

But how do we get the sealed portion? How do we get to that point in time? What are the points of reference regarding the coming forth of that book, not the Book of Mormon, the sealed portion. The rest of 2 Nephi 27 is basically one giant points of reference chain that gets us back to this and answers the question "when do we get the sealed portion?"

**2 Nephi 27**

> **8** Wherefore, because of the things which are sealed up, the things which are sealed shall not be delivered in the day of the wickedness and abominations of the people. Wherefore the book shall be kept from them.

Due to the nature of the words which are sealed up the Saints will not have them delivered to them in the day of their wickedness, slothfulness etc. The days directly before the Redemption of Zion as described in Jacob 5, Doctrine and Covenants 101, etc. etc.

**2 Nephi 27**

> **9** But the book shall be delivered unto a man, and he shall deliver the words of the book, which are the words of those who have slumbered in the dust, and he shall deliver these words unto another;

This can be a confusing verse until you get to verse 15 of this chapter which we will go over. It might be easier for people to read it replacing "a man" and "he" with "Joseph Smith" and replacing "another" with "Martin Harris."

**2 Nephi 27**

> **10** But the words which are sealed he shall not deliver, neither shall he deliver the book. For the book shall be sealed by the power of God, and the revelation which was sealed shall be kept in the book until the own due time of the Lord, that they may come forth; for behold, ***they reveal all things from the foundation of the world unto the end thereof.***

We are still talking about Joseph Smith but now we are being told that Joseph Smith at this time will not be delivering the gold plates themselves or the translation of the sealed portion to Martin Harris. We are once again told that the contents of the sealed portion "reveal all things from the foundation of the world unto the end thereof," once again, extremely Bible-esque.

**2 Nephi 27**

> **11** And the day cometh that the words of the book which were sealed shall be read upon the house tops; and they shall be read by the power of Christ; and all things shall be revealed unto the children of men which ever have been among the children of men, ***and which ever will be even unto the end of the earth.***

There are some who purport that this sealed portion won't come forth until after the end of the earth i.e., the Great and Dreadful Day (see Joseph Smith Translation Genesis, Joseph Smith Matthew). But here we learn that the book will be read ***before the end of the earth*** as these people will be reading things ***which have not happened yet.*** Once again, this ties perfectly into the points of reference as being after the days of wickedness, slothfulness and deep sleep but before the Great and Dreadful Day.

**2 Nephi 27**

> **12** Wherefore, at that day when the book shall be delivered unto the man of whom I have spoken…

Verses 12–14 deal with Joseph's mortal life, in which the book was delivered to him and the testimonies of the three and eight witnesses. If you want to read the testimony of the three and eight witnesses in the Introduction to the Book of Mormon, this would be the time to do it.

But the reason why I stopped here is because we need to stop and read a verse from Joseph Smith History dealing with Joseph's early calling that will come back later.

**Joseph Smith—History**

> **18** My object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join. No sooner, therefore, did I get possession of myself, so as to be able to speak, than I asked the Personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right (for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong)—and which I should join.
>
> **19** I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong; and the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; that: ***"they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof."***

Many in the Church are familiar with this point of reference but they get it confused with verse 25 which we will be going over shortly, and we need to understand a) the correct placement in terms of the points of reference and b) we need to understand the difference between Joseph Smith—History 18–19 and 2 Nephi 27:24–25, which we will get to.

**2 Nephi 27**

> **15** But behold, it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall say ***unto him to whom he shall deliver the book:*** Take ***these words*** which are not sealed ***and deliver them to another,*** that he may show them unto the learned,…

This is the process described in verse 9. This is Joseph Smith delivering the manuscript to Martin Harris who then delivered it to the learned. This process goes from verse 15 to verse 20 and is described well in the Old Testament Student Manual for Isaiah 29:11-12.

**(15-17) Isaiah 29:11–12. What Was the "Book That Is Sealed" and to Whom Were Its "Words" Delivered?**

> Early in the process of translating the Book of Mormon, Martin Harris desired proof that the translation Joseph Smith was making was genuine. He obtained permission to carry a copy of several of the "words" from the plates, together with their translation, to some learned men. Martin Harris's account given to the Prophet Joseph Smith states that he took the copy to Professor Charles Anthon of New York City, who certified that the characters were real and correctly translated. But when Professor Anthon discovered that the record from which the characters were obtained was itself received by supernatural means, he retracted his statement by asking for his certificate back and tearing it to bits. Martin Harris reports that Anthon said that "if I would bring the plates to him he would translate them. I informed him that part of the plates were sealed, and that I was forbidden to bring them. He replied, 'I cannot read a sealed book.' I left him, and went to Dr. Mitchell, who sanctioned what Professor Anthon had said respecting both the characters and the translation" (Joseph Smith—History 1:65).

> The unlearned man to whom the book was delivered was, of course, Joseph Smith. Elder Orson Pratt once said: "Now in regard to Joseph Smith's qualifications or attainments in learning, they were very ordinary. He had received a little education in the common country schools in the vicinity in which he had lived. He could read a little, and could write, but it was in such an ordinary hand that he did not venture to act as his own scribe, but had to employ sometimes one and sometimes another to write as he translated. This unlearned man did not make the same reply that the learned man did. For when the book was delivered to this unlearned youth and he was requested to read it, he replied, 'I am not learned.' I suppose he felt his weakness when the Lord told him to read this book; for he thought it was a great work" (In *Journal of Discourses,* 15:186).
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings-Malachi* (2003), pp. 164–165)

**2 Nephi 27**

> **21** Touch not the things which are sealed, for I will bring them forth in mine own due time; for I will show unto the children of men that I am able to do mine own work.
>
> **22** Wherefore, when thou hast read the words which I have commanded thee, and obtained the witnesses which I have promised unto thee, then shalt thou seal up the book again, and hide it up unto me, that I may preserve the words which thou hast not read, until I shall see fit in mine own wisdom to reveal all things unto the children of men.
>
> **23** For behold, I am God; and I am a God of miracles; and I will show unto the world that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever; and I work not among the children of men save it be according to their faith.

The Lord gives the command to Joseph Smith to translate the Book of Mormon, obtain the witnesses, and to not translate or touch the sealed portion but to return the book back at that time. The Lord then gives some of the rationale for why He will bring out the sealed portion when He brings out the sealed portion.

1. To show that the Lord can do His own work
2. To show the world that He is the same yesterday, today and forever
3. To show that the Lord is a God of miracles, but He does not do those works among the children of men save it be according to their faith

So at this point in time what has happened in the points of reference chain?

1. Joseph receives the plates, translates them, gains the testimonies and then delivers back the book
2. The Lord then describes the conditions and rationale for the book's return and the revealing of the sealed portion

**2 Nephi 27**

> **24** ***And again*** it shall come to pass that the Lord shall say…
>
> **25** Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, ***but have removed their hearts*** far from me, and ***their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men***—

What do we learn in these two verses?

1. That this is now at least the second time that the Lord will have said this or something similar to this to the same individual ("***and again***")
2. There are some major differences between ***the first time*** He said something similar to this, ***and this time.***

With this understanding, it allows us to more clearly understand when this takes place and why there are changes. This takes place after Joseph has finished his work and has returned the plates and directly before the Lord brings forth the sealed portion. That is where we are at with the points of reference. But what about the changes? There are two major changes that should be identified:

1. When Jesus was talking to Joseph in the Sacred Grove He said that men's hearts in that day ***were far from Him.*** Whereas in this instance, a yet future event from us, the Lord says that ***His Saints have removed their hearts from Him.*** This hearkens directly back to the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled (Doctrine and Covenants 45), the neglecting of "the tower" (Doctrine and Covenants 101), "leaving thy first love" (Revelation 2:4-5, Psalm 137:1, etc.)
2. When Jesus was talking to Joseph in the Sacred Grove He said the commandments were taught by men who had a form of godliness but they denied the power thereof. Whereas in this instance, a yet future event from us, the Lord says that the Saints will be taught to fear Him according to the precepts of men. Which also hearkens directly back to the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled (Doctrine and Covenants 45), the neglecting of "the tower" (Doctrine and Covenants 101), "leaving thy first love" (Revelation 2:4-5, Psalm 137:1, etc.).

In the next couple chapters of Nephi, Nephi warns ***the Saints*** in that time period (described by the Savior) of the state that ***they*** are in (a state that we are currently in today). 2 Nephi 28 and 29 are chock-full of references dealing directly to the Saints of today in this state of mind. They have removed their own hearts from the Lord (idolatry) and no longer fear the Lord because they are taught by the precepts of men (priestcraft). Some might be saying right now, "but what about secret combinations?" as I continue to point those out as "The Big Three of The Book of Mormon." Well, you won't have to wait long!

**2 Nephi 27**

> **26** Therefore, I [***shall*** deliver to him the words that he ***shall*** read and] will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.

According to the Lord the marvelous work and a wonder does not begin ***until this time.***

The resurrection of Joseph Smith is now once again proven by the Lord, as ***the Lord is identifying Joseph as the person who will once again receive the sealed portion and translate it.*** If Joseph is dead he must be resurrected in order to do this work.

It is important to note the last line in verse 26 has reference entirely to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (this becomes clear by verse 35).

**2 Nephi 27**

> **27** And wo unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord! And their works are in the dark; and they say: Who seeth us, and who knoweth us? …

I told you that you didn't have to wait long for secret combinations. Also, now that we understand what and who this is talking about, it might be shocking for some to hear the Lord personally identify members of the Church as being members of secret combinations. But this shouldn't be, as we have parables such as the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares taught by the Savior himself, which make us aware of such a condition.

> **27** … And they also say: Surely, your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay. But behold, I will show unto them, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I know all their works. For shall the work say of him that made it, he made me not? Or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, he had no understanding?

The second half of the verse helps us identify the secret combinations in the Church at this time period. This secret combination of members in the Church have as their aim to align the Church with Babylon. They want the Church to be more progressive, they want to light the Y in BYU in rainbow colors, they want racial tensions, they want acceptance of

LGBTQ+, they want to hold hands with the world and drag the Church into it. Their complaint at this day is that, "You are turning the Church upside down—you are getting the world to hate us, you are going to destroy the Church, etc." And the Lord is saying He knows why you ***really*** have a problem with it. He knows what is in your heart and what you have been saying in secret. The Lord, at this time, will take The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the clay pot), and He will put it back in the refiner's fire, and He will take out of it The Church of the Firstborn and the Kingdom of God—and Joseph Smith Jr. is the servant identified by the Lord who will be doing it.

From verses 28–35 the Lord says that the words of "the book" (which we should know from now is actually referring to the sealed portion) will be the means of opening the eyes of the spiritually blind and will bring them out of spiritual darkness so that they may understand and learn doctrine. We also learn that Jacob will no longer be ashamed and that they shall see the terrible one brought to naught. This has reference to the Assyrian and the redemption and building of New Jerusalem and those same Isaiah verses we went over at the start of the chapter (1 Nephi 21).

**Blessing given by Oliver Cowdery** (September 22, 1835)

> The records of past ages and generations, and the histories of ancient days shall he bring forth: ***even the record of the Nephites shall he again obtain,*** with all those hid up by Mormon, and others who were righteous, and many others, till he is overwhelmed with knowledge. No precious thing shall slumber from his possession, for he shall be covered with the most choice of all ages, till his soul shall be satisfied and his heart shall say, Enough, Enough!
>
> In his hands shall the Urim and Thummim remain and the holy ministry, and the keys of the evangelical priesthood, also, for an everlasting priesthood forever, even the patriarchal; for, behold, he is the first patriarch in the last days. He shall sit in the great assembly and general council of patriarchs, and execute the will and commandment of God under the direction of the Ancient of Days; for he shall have his place and act in his station. Behold, my brother Joseph is blessed: blessed are all who bless him, and bles sed are all those whom he blesses. Multitudes, multitudes, shall come to a knowledge of the truth through his ministry, and he shall be welcomed into the presence of kings and the great ones of the earth; for he shall claim his place among the nobles of the earth and shall be reverenced by them.
>
> (*Patriarchal Blessings Book,* Volume 2:28; *The Joseph Smith Papers,* "Blessing from Oliver Cowdery, 22 September 1835," pp. 15–16)

**Alma 37**

> **21** And now, I will speak unto you concerning those twenty-four plates, that ye keep them, that the mysteries and the works of darkness, and their secret works, or the secret works of those people who have been destroyed, may be made manifest unto this people; yea, all their murders, and robbings, and their plunderings, and all their wickedness and abominations, may be made manifest unto this people; yea, and that ye preserve these interpreters.
>
> **22** For behold, the Lord saw that his people began to work in darkness, yea, work secret murders and abominations; therefore the Lord said, if they did not repent they should be destroyed from off the face of the earth.
>
> **23** And the Lord said: I will prepare unto my servant ***Gazelem,*** a stone, which shall shine forth in darkness unto light, that I may discover unto my people who serve me, that I may discover unto them the works of their brethren, yea, their secret works, their works of darkness, and their wickedness and abominations.
>
> **24** And now, my son, these interpreters were prepared that the word of God might be fulfilled, which he spake, saying:
>
> **25** I will bring forth out of darkness unto light all their secret works and their abominations; and except they repent I will destroy them from off the face of the earth; and I will bring to light all their secrets and abominations, unto every nation that shall hereafter possess the land.
>
> **26** And now, my son, we see that they did not repent; therefore they have been destroyed, and thus far the word of God has been fulfilled; yea, their secret abominations have been brought out of darkness and made known unto us.

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

> Gazelam (See ADAMIC LANGUAGE, JOSEPH SMITH THE PROPHET.)
>
> Strange and unusual names were placed by the Prophet in some of the early revelations so that the individuals whom the Lord was then addressing would not be known to the world. The purpose for keeping these identities secret from their enemies having long since passed, the true names are now found in the Doctrine and Covenants.
>
> ***Two of the names which identified the Prophet himself were Gazelam and Enoch.*** (D.&C. 78:9; 82:11; 104:26, 43, 45, 46.) Presumptively these and other names used at the same time have particular meanings, which are not now known to us.
>
> With reference to the name Gazelam, it is interesting to note that Alma in directing Helaman to preserve both the Urim and Thummim and the plates containing the Book of Ether, says that such record will be brought to light ***by the Lord's servant Gazelem, who will use "a stone" in his translation work.*** (Alma 37:21-23.) ***It may be that Gazelem is a variant spelling of Gazelam and that Alma's reference is to the Prophet Joseph Smith who did in fact bring forth part at least of the Ether record.***
>
> (*Mormon Doctrine,* pp. 220–221)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> [The Lord] will give me dominion over all and every one of them, ***when their refuge of lies shall fail, and their hiding place shall be destroyed,*** while these smooth-polished stones with which I come in contact [as the arrow] become marred.
>
> (*History of the Church,* 5:401)

Joseph Smith in this quote was not only identifying himself as the servant in Isaiah 49, as the polished arrow—he was also identifying himself once again as Gazelam. Gazelam was used as a substitute name for Joseph Smith (to protect him) that appeared many times in the Doctrine and Covenants (D&C 78:9, 82:11, 104:26, 43,45,46). In 1981 all of the uses of Gazelam were replaced with Joseph Smith Jr. All except for the one used in Alma 37. "Why?" someone might ask… Well, Joseph in the quote listed above, identified himself as Gazelam in the context of Alma 37 ***only after the shot.*** We know that "the shot" is ***after his resurrection,*** so we know that Joseph Smith Jr. was never supposed to accomplish Alma 37 in his life, but rather after his resurrection—and since what was prophesied in Alma 37 has yet to take place, a "hiding of the identity" still applies.

# VII. Preserve

**Ether 13**

> **6** … New Jerusalem should be built up upon this land, unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph, ***for which things there has been a type.***
>
> **7** For as Joseph brought his father down into the land of Egypt, even so he died there; wherefore, the Lord brought a remnant of the seed of Joseph out of the land of Jerusalem, ***that he might be merciful unto the seed of Joseph that they should perish not, even as he was merciful unto the father of Joseph that he should perish not.***
>
> **8** Wherefore, the remnant of the house of Joseph shall be built upon this land; and it shall be a land of their inheritance; and they shall build up a holy city unto the Lord, like unto the Jerusalem of old; and they

> shall no more be confounded, until the end come when the earth shall pass away.

Joseph in Egypt prepares the people and saves them from a seven-year famine. Two plus years into the famine Joseph's brothers join Joseph in the foreign land under the direction of Joseph. Eventually even Joseph's father joins him in the foreign land once everything is prepared.

**Blessing given by Oliver Cowdery** (September 22, 1835)

> ***For, like Joseph of old shall he be: he shall save the just from desolation, by the wise counsel of the Almighty; for by his direction shall they gather into storehouses and barns, till they overflow with the richness of the fruit of harvest: and by this means shall the just be saved from famine, while the nations of the wicked are distressed and faint.***
>
> In due time shall he go forth toward the north, and by the power of his word shall the deep begin to give way and the ice melt before the sun. By the keys of the Kingdom shall he lead Israel into the land of Zion while the house of Jacob shouts in the danse and in the song—Joy, O my soul, in that day, for thou shalt be with him and bear thy part in the keys which are confirmed thee for an everlasting priesthood, forever and ever—Joy, O my heart, in that day, with thanksgiving and with praise, for thou shalt stand with him before the hosts of Israel—the lame shall leap as a hart, the old shall renew his strength, and the virgin of Israel, with the youth, shall exalt the name of our God upon harps and instruments of tens[e] strings.
>
> (*Patriarchal Blessings Book,* Volume 2:28; *The Joseph Smith Papers,* "Blessing from Oliver Cowdery, 22 September 1835," pp. 15–16)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country.
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p.17)

**Doctrine and Covenants 133**

> **26** And they who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord; and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves; and they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence.
>
> **27** And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep.
>
> **28** Their enemies shall become a prey unto them,
>
> **29** And in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water; and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land.
>
> **30** And they shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim, my servants.
>
> **31** And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence.
>
> **32** And there shall they fall down and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim.
>
> **33** And they shall be filled with songs of everlasting joy.
>
> **34** Behold, this is the blessing of the everlasting God upon the tribes of Israel, and the richer blessing upon the head of Ephraim and his fellows.

**3 Nephi 21**

> **23** And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.
>
> **24** And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem.
>
> **25** And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst.
>
> **26** And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, ***yea, even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem.***
>
> **27** Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, with the Father to prepare the way whereby they may come unto me, that they may call on the Father in my name.
>
> **28** Yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father among all nations in preparing the way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance.
>
> **29** And they shall go out from all nations; and they shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight, for I will go before them, saith the Father, and I will be their rearward.

**2 Nephi 22:1**

> **1** And then shall that which is written come to pass: Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child; for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.

**Moses 7**

> **61** ...but my people ***will I preserve;***
>
> **62** And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> I have read it precisely as the words flowed from the lips of Jesus Christ. John the Revelator saw an angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth.
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 365)

Joseph Smith here identified himself as John's "angel flying through the midst of heaven," which we broke down completely in the previous chapter; however, continuing with the quote:

> The scripture is ready to be fulfilled...

Joseph Smith identified himself as this angel and then says this prophecy is ready to be fulfilled, meaning a future event. At this point in time, 1844, the Book of Mormon was already published (Moroni), and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is already restored and missionary work had already commenced. The key for this chapter then becomes "when would this happen?"

**Joseph** explains as he continues,

> ...when great wars, famines, pestilence, great distress, judgments, etc. ***are ready to be poured out on the inhabitants of the earth.***
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 365)

So ***directly before*** the great wars, famines, pestilences, great distresses, and judgments etc. are to be poured out on the inhabitants of the earth, the Lord will "send down righteousness out of heaven," i.e., this angel, i.e. Joseph Smith Jr. to preserve His people.

# Joseph's Boys: A Remnant of Jacob

## Why Study These Things?

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> As you study your scriptures during the next six months, I encourage you to make a list of all that the Lord has promised He will do for covenant Israel. I think you will be astounded! Ponder these promises. Talk about them with your family and friends. Then live and watch for these promises to be fulfilled in your own life.
>
> ("Let God Prevail," General Conference, October 2020)

**Moroni 7**

> **32** And by so doing, the Lord God prepareth the way that the residue of men may have faith in Christ, that the Holy Ghost may have place in their hearts, according to the power thereof; and after this manner bringeth to pass the Father, the covenants which he hath made unto the children of men.
>
> **33** And Christ hath said: If ye will have faith in me ye shall have power to do whatsoever thing is expedient in me.
>
> **34** And he hath said: Repent all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me, and be baptized in my name, and have faith in me, that ye may be saved.
>
> **35** And now, my beloved brethren, if this be the case that these things are true which I have spoken unto you, and God will show unto you, with power and great glory at the last day, that they are true, and if they are true has the day of miracles ceased?
>
> **36** Or have angels ceased to appear unto the children of men? Or has he withheld the power of the Holy Ghost from them? Or will he, so long as time shall last, or the earth shall stand, or there shall be one man upon the face thereof to be saved?
>
> **37** Behold I say unto you, Nay; for it is by faith that miracles are wrought; and it is by faith that angels appear and minister unto men; wherefore, if these things have ceased wo be unto the children of men, for it is because of unbelief, and all is vain.

**2 Nephi 28**

> **3** For it shall come to pass in that day that the churches which are built up, and not unto the Lord, when the one shall say unto the other: Behold, I, I am the Lord's; and the others shall say: I, I am the Lord's; and thus shall every one say that hath built up churches, and not unto the Lord—
>
> **4** And they shall contend one with another; and their priests shall contend one with another, and they shall teach with their learning, and deny the Holy Ghost, which giveth utterance.
>
> **5** And they deny the power of God, the Holy One of Israel; and they say unto the people: Hearken unto us, and hear ye our precept; for behold there is no God today, for the Lord and the Redeemer hath done his work, and he hath given his power unto men;
>
> **6** Behold, hearken ye unto my precept; if they shall say there is a miracle wrought by the hand of the Lord, believe it not; for this day he is not a God of miracles; he hath done his work.
>
> **7** Yea, and there shall be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die; and it shall be well with us.
>
> **8** And there shall also be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry; nevertheless, fear God—he will justify in committing a little sin; yea, lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this; and do all these things, for tomorrow we die; and if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God.
>
> **9** Yea, and there shall be many which shall teach after this manner, false and vain and foolish doctrines, and shall be puffed up in their hearts, and shall seek deep to hide their counsels from the Lord; and their works shall be in the dark.
>
> **10** And the blood of the saints shall cry from the ground against them.
>
> **11** Yea, they have all gone out of the way; they have become corrupted.
>
> **12** Because of pride, and because of false teachers, and false doctrine, their churches have become corrupted, and their churches are lifted up; because of pride they are puffed up.
>
> **13** They rob the poor because of their fine sanctuaries; they rob the poor because of their fine clothing; and they persecute the meek and the poor in heart, because in their pride they are puffed up.
>
> **14** They wear stiff necks and high heads; yea, and because of pride, and wickedness, and abominations, and whoredoms, they have all gone astray save it be a few, who are the humble followers of Christ; nevertheless, they are led, that in many instances they do err because they are taught by the precepts of men.

**2 Nephi 27:24–28: "A Marvelous Work and a Wonder"**

> The "marvelous work and a wonder" spoken of by the Lord in 2 Nephi 27:26 ***includes*** the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the priesthood and the Church, and the presence of latter-day prophets on the earth. ***But it is even more than these things.*** It is the restoration of *all* things, including the establishment of Zion on the earth again.
>
> (*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (1996), PDF Version, pp. 39–40)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> Our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, will perform some of His mightiest works between now and when He comes again. We will see miraculous indications that God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, preside over this Church in majesty and glory. But in coming days, it will not be possible to survive spiritually without the guiding, directing, comforting, and constant influence of the Holy Ghost.
>
> ("Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives," General Conference, April 2018)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> Your mountains will vary, and yet the answer to each of your challenges is to increase your faith. That takes work. Lazy learners and lax disciples will always struggle to muster even a particle of faith.
>
> ("Christ Is Risen; Faith in Him Will Move Mountains," General Conference, April 2021)

**Jeremiah 16**

> **14** ¶ Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;
>
> **15** But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

**Romans 10**

> **14** How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? ***and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?*** and how shall they hear without a preacher?

> **15** And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, ***How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!***
>
> **16** ***So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.***
>
> **17** But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.
>
> **18** But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?
>
> **19** But I say, Did not Israel know? Now Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.
>
> **20** But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.
>
> **21** But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

I can't tell you how many times I've heard "well, so long as I'm going to church, paying my tithing, going to the temple, the Lord won't withhold ANY blessings from me! Ergo, I don't need to study and understand last-day timelines and events!"

What have we learned from the above scriptures and quotes?

1. Without *learning via the Word of God and the Spirit of Prophecy* we will never *know a thing*
2. Without *knowing a thing,* we will never be able to *exercise faith in the thing*
3. Without *exercising faith in the thing,* the Lord can never use us *in the miracle of the thing*
4. Without the Lord using people *to bring forth miracles,* the covenants made to the House of Israel can never be realized

Simply put, ***the*** Marvelous Work and a Wonder will be the Lord's most amazing, wonderful, miraculous displays of power the world has ever seen. It will be spearheaded by Joseph Smith Jr. as we have already gone over in the previous two chapters of this section, the only question that remains is "who is going to be working these miracles ***with*** Joseph Smith Jr.?" Only those who have sufficient faith to work such miracles tied to ***the*** Marvelous Work and a Wonder, and to obtain faith in ***the*** Marvelous Work and a Wonder ***we will have to first know what that entails***... If one doesn't learn via the Word of God and the Spirit of Prophecy they will never know, and without knowing they will never be able to obtain faith sufficient to work miracles, and thus will not be used by the Lord in those miracles, in the Lord making bare His arm in the eyes of all nations in bringing to pass the covenants and promises made to the House of Israel...

Why study these things? Because it will never be said of those who don't study these things, "how blessed are their feet upon the Mountains..." Period.

**D&C 103:19–20. Why Did the Lord Promise Modern Israel That Both His Angels and His Presence Would Go before Them?**

> The Lord sought to make ancient Israel "a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Exodus 19:6). He told Moses to prepare the people so that He could "come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai" (Exodus 19:11). The people saw the power of God manifested on the mount, and they were fearful. They asked that the Lord not speak directly with them but rather that Moses speak with God and bring His message to them (see Exodus 10:18–21; Deuteronomy 5:22–31). Despite Moses' efforts to sanctify the people, they would not prepare themselves to see God by living the higher laws that would enable them to become a holy nation. Therefore, they were given the "law of carnal commandments" (D&C 84:27) and were led, no longer by the Lord's immediate presence, but by his angels (see D&C 84:23–26; Exodus 23:20; JST, Exodus 34:1–2).
>
> In the final dispensation these circumstances will not exist. Latter-day Saints have been given the higher priesthood and the laws and ordinances that enable them to be brought back into the presence of God (see D&C 84:19–22; 107:18–19). There will be a pure people prepared to receive the Lord when He comes (see Moses 7:62–64; D&C 35:20–21; 100:16). Those who return to redeem Zion will live the laws of the celestial kingdom (see D&C 105:5) and thus will be prepared to be led by the presence of the Lord.
>
> **Elder Orson Pratt** spoke of the need to become a sanctified people. "When we go back to Jackson County, we are to go back with power. Do you suppose that God will reveal his power among an unsanctified people, who have no regard nor respect for his laws and institutions, but who are filled with covetousness? No. When God shows forth his power among the Latter-day Saints, it will be because there is a union of feeling in regard to doctrine, and in regard to everything that God has placed in their hands; and not only a union, but a sanctification on their part, that there shall not be a spot or wrinkle as it were, but everything shall be as fair as the sun that shines in the heavens." (In *Journal of Discourses,* 15:361.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 250)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> One crucial element of this gathering is preparing a people who are able, ready, and worthy to receive the Lord when He comes again, a people who have already chosen Jesus Christ over this fallen world, a people who rejoice in their agency to live the higher, holier laws of Jesus Christ.
>
> I call upon you, my dear brothers and sisters, to become this righteous people.
>
> ("Overcome the World and Find Rest," General Conference, October 2022)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> "The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do (see Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7).
>
> ("The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior's Second Coming," *Ensign,* April 2020)

## Faith as the Brother of Jared

**Ether 4**

> **1** And the Lord commanded the ***brother of Jared*** to go down out of the mount from the presence of the Lord, and ***write the things which he had seen;*** and ***they were forbidden to come unto the children of men until after that he should be lifted up upon the cross;*** and for this cause did king Mosiah keep them, that they should not come unto the world until after Christ should show himself unto his people.
>
> **2** And after Christ truly had showed himself unto his people he commanded that they should be made manifest.

**3 Nephi 26**

> **3** And [Christ] did expound all things, even from the beginning until the time that he should come in his glory—yea, even all things which should come upon the face of the earth, even until the elements should melt with fervent heat, and the earth should be wrapt together as a scroll, and the heavens and the earth should pass away;
>
> **4** And even unto the great and last day, when all people, and all kindreds, and all nations and tongues shall stand before God, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil—
>
> **5** If they be good, to the resurrection of everlasting life; and if they be evil, to the resurrection of damnation; being on a parallel, the one on the one hand and the other on the other hand, according to the mercy,

and the justice, and the holiness which is in Christ, who was before the world began.

**6** And now there cannot be written in this book even a hundredth part of the things which Jesus did truly teach unto the people;

**7** But behold the plates of Nephi do contain the more part of the things which he taught the people.

**8** And these things have I written, which are a lesser part of the things which he taught the people; and I have written them to the intent that they may be brought again unto this people, from the Gentiles, according to the words which Jesus hath spoken.

**9** And when they shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, ***and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things then shall the greater things be made manifest unto them.***

**10** ***And if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation.***

**11** Behold, I was about to write them, all which were engraven upon the plates of Nephi, but the Lord forbade it, saying: ***I will try the faith of my people.***

**12** Therefore I, Mormon, do write the things which have been commanded me of the Lord. And now I, Mormon, make an end of my sayings, and proceed to write the things which have been commanded me.

The brother of Jared saw all and wrote it down. Mosiah came upon it but was commanded to keep them and to not show them forth until after Christ's resurrection. When Christ appeared to the Nephites He revealed it to them, a vision from the beginning of time to the end thereof.

Mormon and Moroni were told that this record, this vision, should not come forth until after people receive the Book of Mormon and show ***by their faith that they believe it*** and then the greater things, i.e., that vision, will be made manifest unto them (the Lord wanted to try the faith of His people, give them a "test," once they passed that test the greater things would be revealed). Mormon was commanded not to write it; Moroni was commanded to write it but to seal it up. This is referred to as the "sealed portion" of the gold plates, which are gone over in great detail in the previous chapter (2 Nephi 27).

We learn in verse 10 of 3 Nephi 26 that ***if a generation does not believe → then the greater things will be withheld from them unto their condemnation.*** This is tied directly to:

**Doctrine and Covenants 105**

**2** Behold, I say unto you, were it not for the transgressions of my people, speaking concerning the church and not individuals, ***they might have been redeemed even now.***

Any generation that would have made themselves worthy would have redeemed and built New Jerusalem and as part of that ***received these greater things.*** This is tied directly to:

**Doctrine and Covenants 84**

**50** And by this you may know they are under the bondage of sin, because they come not unto me.

**51** For whoso cometh not unto me is under the bondage of sin.

**52** And whoso receiveth not my voice is not acquainted with my voice, and is not of me.

**53** And by this you may know the righteous from the wicked, and that the whole world groaneth under sin and darkness even now.

**54** And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—

**55** Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation.

**56** And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all.

**57** And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written—

**58** That they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom; otherwise there remaineth a scourge and judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion.

**59** For shall the children of the kingdom pollute my holy land? Verily, I say unto you, Nay.

**60** Verily, verily, I say unto you who now hear my words, which are my voice, blessed are ye inasmuch as you receive these things;

The way to hear the Lord's voice is through reading the scriptures; even personal revelation is superseded by revealed revelation. The only way one receives true personal revelation is by first hearing Him by reading the words of God, and then by heeding Him by doing what one has read.

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

Our right to guidance from Holy Ghost. We have the right to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, ***but we cannot have that guidance, if we wilfully refuse to consider the revelations that have been given*** to help us to understand and to guide us in the light and truth of the everlasting gospel. ***We cannot hope to have that guidance when we refuse to consider these great revelations*** which mean so much to us both temporally and spiritually.

Now if we find ourselves in this condition of unbelief or unwillingness to seek for the light and the knowledge which the Lord has placed within our reach, then we are liable or in danger of being deceived by evil spirits, the doctrines of devils, and the teachings of men. And when these false influences are presented before us, we will not have the distinguishing understanding by which we can segregate them and know that they are not of the Lord. And so we may become prey unto the ungodly, to the vicious, to the cunning, to the craftiness of men.

(*Doctrines of Salvation,* p. 43)

**Ether 4**

**4** Behold, I have written upon these plates the very things which the brother of Jared saw; and there never were greater things made manifest than those which were made manifest unto the brother of Jared.

**5** Wherefore the Lord hath commanded me to write them; and I have written them. And he commanded me that I should seal them up; and he also hath commanded that I should seal up the interpretation thereof; wherefore I have sealed up the interpreters, according to the commandment of the Lord.

**Ether 3:25; 4:1–7. The Sealed Portion of the Book of Mormon**

Moroni wrote that the brother of Jared (Moriancumer) recorded in his vision all the inhabitants of the earth from beginning to end (see Ether 3:25; see also Ether 2:13). This vision reveals "all things from the foundation of the world unto the end thereof" (2 Nephi 27:10). Moroni explained that "there never were greater things made manifest" than what the brother of Jared saw (Ether 4:4). We know that Moroni sealed a copy of this vision with the plates he delivered to Joseph Smith (see Ether 4:5; 5:1). Moroni further informed us of the conditions the Lord indicated must exist for this sealed portion of the record to come forth. The scriptures indicate we must repent; exercise faith in the Lord, like the brother of Jared did; and become sanctified (see Ether 4:6–7).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

**Ether 4** (continued)

**6** For the Lord said unto me: They shall not go forth unto the Gentiles until the day that they shall repent of their iniquity, and become clean before the Lord.

> 7 ***And in that day that they shall exercise faith in me, saith the Lord, even as the brother of Jared did, that they may become sanctified in me,*** then will I manifest unto them the things which the brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my revelations, saith Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are.

*They will not go forth until the day the Gentiles exercise faith in the Lord, like the brother of Jared did; and become sanctified.* This is our entire purpose, to get members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to understand what it means to have the faith as the brother of Jared and rise to that standard.

The story of the Brother of Jared might be one of the most misunderstood and mistaught stories in the Book of Mormon, and understanding it is central to understanding what it means to have "faith like the Brother of Jared," so let's go into the story of Jared and his brother before continuing on.

Once we understand the story, the rest of this chapter will come alive to you. It is also important to note that the story of Jared and his brother is long, but what verse 7 is referring to is a specific story/event in the life of Jared and his brother, and that is the story we need to understand.

In Ether Chapter 1, we learn that Jared and his brother were at the Tower of Babel when the languages were confounded, the Lord preserves their language and they are promised to be led to a choice land. In Ether Chapter 2 the Lord is leading them to the promised choice land, they crossed many waters, built barges as the traveled, until Jared and his brethren came to "that great sea which divideth the lands." They lived by that seashore for four years at which point in time the Lord came to the brother of Jared and rebuked and chastened him for not remembering to call upon the name of the Lord. The brother of Jared and his brethren repented (you might say they "woke up") and they once again desired the land of promise. Remember that the command was for them to go to the promised land (i.e., "build the tower" D&C 101) but they became complacent and felt comfortable where they were. The Lord then commanded them to build new barges and the Lord gave specific instructions on how they were to be built. After they were built the brother of Jared had more questions for the Lord:

1. How shall we see? (light)
2. How shall we steer? (direction)
3. How shall we breathe? (sustain)

The Lord answers and says in order to have air make holes in the barges and cork them. They then went and did it. So he only got one of the questions answered.

Once they had completed making air holes, the brother of Jared once again asked the Lord, "how shall we see, how shall we steer?" The Lord answers and says that He will personally steer him and his people so he doesn't need to worry about that.

But he then turns around and asks the brother of Jared "what would ye do that ye should have light?" A lot of members teach this as though the Lord just got tired of answering questions, like "I'll answer this question and I'll answer that question and I'm going to randomly not answer this question because, I'm tired of answering your questions dude…" Some members will teach this as the Lord won't answer all of your questions, there are some questions He wants you to figure out on your own—but they don't go into or explain what specifically those questions the Lord won't answer are and how he then expects you to find the answer.

The truth of the matter is that the Lord didn't just randomly pick one question of Jared's brother not to answer, and the Lord in our lives won't just randomly pick questions to answer and not to answer. There is a purpose and a reason behind everything, and the reason for the Lord not answering questions ***is an extremely specific one.***

We learn with the story of Joseph Smith that Joseph had a question, "which of all the sects are right?" (JS–H 1:18) but we sometimes omit one of the most important parts of the story, which is what? Joseph had that question ***and what did he first do?*** Did he go off into the woods to pray immediately? No, ***he went to the scriptures.*** He then, after much study, came to the realization that this question could not be answered in the scriptures and so then his question turned into, "if the answer isn't in the scriptures, how do I get the truth?" His question changed, but did he stop going to the scriptures to obtain the answer? No. He then, in his studies, comes across James "if any of you lack wisdom, ask God, who won't get upset at you for asking and He will freely give you the answers" (JS–H 1:11). And we know the rest of the story.

But yet we teach the story of the brother of Jared as though the brother of Jared asked the Lord a question and the Lord very much did get upset and didn't give the brother of Jared the answer. This is where the heresy of men teach the reasons for this via precepts of men to their condemnation. Men will teach that the Lord wanted Jared ***to use his own judgment and his own wisdom to figure it out on his own.*** But is that what we learn with the story of Joseph Smith ***or any other story in the scriptures?*** No. To teach man to rely on their own judgment, logic, etc. is to teach men to trust in the arm of flesh, and then once you have acquired the arm of flesh go seek the Lord's approval in it. Let me here boldly say this is heresy, this is not why the Lord ever doesn't answer questions. Not only is teaching it this way heresy, it is also insulting to the brother of Jared and his brethren. You're telling me that the Lord thought that the brother of Jared and his brethren were too dumb to figure out "cut a hole in the top and cork it?" That's what you're telling me? If the Lord had asked, "what do you think you should do to make sure you have air?" how many answers to that could there be? Can any of you think of another answer then "cut a hole in it" But then the next question would be, "how do I keep water from coming in?" and once again, how many people can come up with another answer other than "cork it." This is an extremely basic process "cut a hole, cork it, when you need air uncork it, if water comes in, cork it again." But yet the Lord not only answered the brother of Jared in this, he answered him very specifically, just like the specific details on how to build the barge. The same thing could be said for "how are we going to steer this?" The only answer, literally, is that ***"we aren't*** going to steer it, it's impossible, ***therefore*** the Lord is going to steer us." That was literally the only answer, but yet the Lord answered that question (despite its obvious answer) in once again great detail.

So then we get to the question of light. Not only is this the most complicated question, the Lord eliminates all of the obvious answers. You can't put a window in because it will be smashed to bits, neither can you go by fire, etc. (Ether 2:23) Wouldn't you think this of all three questions deserves the attention of the Lord? The answer is yes, the problem is that the Lord is bound by laws and the Lord bound by those laws (laws of the celestial kingdom) cannot act outside of those laws. And what is the single most important law that is overlooked in this story at this moment? "We do not have the right to the guidance of the Holy Ghost when we neglect revealed doctrine." (President Joseph Fielding Smith in the quote provided above but this principle occurs over and over again).

We teach this story as though the brother of Jared left this encounter, sat on a rock, put himself in the "thinker" pose and sat there until he came up with an idea. And then once he came up with that idea, he presented that idea to the Lord and because he had so much faith he could see the finger of the Lord. But wherein lies the heresy of this teaching? If you teach the story this way ***in what*** or ***in whom*** was the brother of Jared's faith centered? His faith would be centered in his own idea and in the Lord's approval of his idea. That is heresy. The Lord wants us to have faith in Him, not in ourselves and our own ideas.

So, what did happen and why didn't the Lord simply just answer him? Clearly the answer to the brother of Jared's question had already been answered. If you are the brother of Jared and you have this wisdom,

you know that the Lord doesn't want you to just sit on a rock and come up with the answer, that's not how the kingdom of God operates. You know that you need to turn to the scriptures. But what scriptures have taken place that he would have at his disposal at this time, the time period from Adam to shortly after the Tower of Babel? What event took place during that time period? Noah, the ark and the flood. If you were the brother of Jared and you were in this predicament what scriptures and stories would you turn to for an answer? Wouldn't the story of Noah be the place to start? And wouldn't the question be, "how did Noah get light?"

Let's read how Noah got light:

**Genesis 6**

> **16** A window shalt thou make to the ark…

The very first thing you should notice when reading this is that the grammar doesn't make sense. Why would you build a window to go to the ark? Wouldn't you build a window in the ark? So Noah is building something specific, something specific that the Lord at that time is showing Noah how to build. Why didn't the Lord ask Noah, "what do you want me to do Noah so that you should have light?" He simply told Noah. Why? Because at that time there was no revealed word on the subject—there was no ensample! So what is this "window"? The word in Hebrew that this is translated from is "tsohar" (see footnotes for Genesis 6:16), which "some rabbis believed was a precious stone that shone in the ark." Are you starting to see what happened here?

The brother of Jared went to the story of Noah, read about this stone that shone, in the scriptures, went and molted stones after their manner and then took the stones to the Lord. And then standing before the Lord the brother of Jared said, "I know that if you touch these stones they will provide light for us as we journey ***just like you did for Noah."*** (summary of Ether 3:4)

Now, where was the brother of Jared's faith centered? The faith of the brother of Jared was centered in ***the scriptures, the Lord, an understanding that the Lord is the same yesterday, today and forever, and that if the Lord did something for Noah He can do it for me. That is the faith of the brother of Jared.*** It wasn't an ignorant faith, it wasn't faith in the arm of flesh etc., it was not simply believing. It was knowing that the words of God ***were real and literal,*** it never entered his mind that this stone that he was reading about with Noah was figurative, he read the story and when he read "stone that shone forth light" he knew that it meant a "stone that shone forth light" and he went and literally made stones of ore and he literally wanted the Lord to touch them and turn them into the same type of stones that he knew Noah had. Once again, ***this is the faith of the brother of Jared,*** this is what is required for us today before we get the sealed portion. Having literal faith in the scriptures that we have now.

Once again, the first step in that equation is obviously what? We have to know the scriptures. Once we know the scriptures we have to have faith in their literal fulfilments. To make figurative or spiritualize is the veil of unbelief, to believe in them literally and plainly is to have the faith of the brother of Jared.

Has this concept of Ephraim waking up and believing in the literal fulfilment of scriptures again been taught or prophesied of anywhere else? The answer to that is yes; it is found in Isaiah 51, and I would like to read **Brother Hyrum Andrus** explaining it:

> In chapter 28 of Isaiah, as he talks about the drunkards of Ephraim, and this isn't drunkards in the sense that they get it from a bottle, it's the kind of drunkenness when it says "they are drunk, but not with strong drink. "They are drunk with the ideals and the zeal and the culture of the Gentile society, and they act on that principle and march by that drum beat. Then speaking of the judgments to come upon Ephraim in that day, in verse 5, he says this: "In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty unto the residue of his people. "Isaiah 51 is a whole chapter devoted to that righteous remnant. Note how he begins: "Hearken unto me, ye that follow after righteousness." This, then, is that righteous remnant. "Look unto the rock from whence ye were hewn, and to the hole of the pit from whence ye are digged."Go back to your roots. See where you came from. Find out who you were. Find out what the Lord wants you to do. "Look to the rock from whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit from whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham," there's an example." Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you; for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him." Now, this remnant is going to be left alone, they are going to sit in the dust. Many are going to say, "The Lord has forsaken us." What is your consolation? You go back to your roots and you look to Abraham, and you say, "I'm a descendant of Abraham, and the Lord is going to handle me like he did him…"
>
> (Seminar on the Book of Mormon: Lecture 13, "Nephi—The Key to Isaiah" )

"Look to the rock from whence ye were hewn," can we not see the powerful symbolism and word association? The brother of Jared looked to Noah, the rock from whence he was hewn, and he believed that Noah literally built an ark, and he believed that the Lord literally showed Noah the process to build and make a literal stone that literally shone forth. The brother of Jared looked to that and said, "the Lord will treat me as He treated Noah." That faith was perfected and because of that the brother of Jared saw the finger of the Lord and then the Lord could no longer withhold anything from the brother of Jared any longer and that is when he was given the vision and that is why we have Ether Chapter 4.

The reason why the Lord could not answer that question for the brother of Jared ***was that the answer was already available to him,*** and when the answer is available to us ***in the scriptures and we have neglected to read them we do not qualify for additional revelation or the Holy Ghost.*** After this event the brother of Jared and his brethren entered the promised land.

This is a clear type or shadow (gone over in a subsequent chapter) that the sealed portion of the scriptures will come forth in the day of the redemption and building of New Jerusalem (i.e., obtaining our promised land) for in the day that Joseph's boys wake up, and look to the rock from whence they were hewn, and have faith as the brother of Jared, meaning they believe in the return of Joseph Smith, they believe in the literal redemption of New Jerusalem, they believe in the literal return of the ten tribes, etc., when they wake up, purify their lives, and begin to have that faith, the Lord will no longer be able to withhold us from entering the vineyard, "for shall I, the Lord, suffer that my holy land be polluted?" (D&C 84:59) We will not take part in the redemption and building of New Jerusalem if we are not worthy of it (i.e., when our presence would pollute it). We need to look to the rock from whence we were hewn, Joseph Smith, the words of God, etc., and we need to believe.

## Rending the Veil of Unbelief

Having faith as the Brother of Jared leads us to rend the veil of unbelief.

**Ether 4**

> **11** …and he shall know and bear record. For because of my Spirit he shall know that these things are true; for it persuadeth men to do good.
>
> **12** And whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do good is of me; for good cometh of none save it be of me. I am the same that leadeth men to all good; ***he that will not believe my words will not believe me***—that I am; and ***he that will not believe me will not believe the Father*** who sent me. For behold, I am the Father, I am the light, and the life, and the truth of the world.
>
> **13** Come unto me, O ye Gentiles, and I will show unto you the greater things, the knowledge which is hid up ***because of unbelief.***

**14** Come unto me, O ye house of Israel, and it shall be made manifest unto you how great things the Father hath laid up for you, from the foundation of the world; and it hath not come unto you, ***because of unbelief.***

The scriptures are written by the power of the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost is the mind of God (Lectures on Faith), the words of Christ, Charity, and those who hear it, hear Him. If you don't hear Him, meaning if you don't have the faith of the brother of Jared, you will not be granted this power and you will be shown no greater things. The reason why this (the sealed portion, the redemption of Zion etc.) has been withheld from previous generations is due to this unbelief, and this unbelief is synonymous with an inability to hear Him and the veil of unbelief.

So when will this event take place?

**15** Behold, ***when ye shall rend that veil of unbelief*** which doth cause you to remain in your awful state of wickedness, and hardness of heart, and blindness of mind, ***then shall the great and marvelous things which have been hid up from the foundation of the world from you***—yea, when ye shall call upon the Father in my name, with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, ***then shall ye know that the Father hath remembered the covenant which he made unto your fathers, O house of Israel.***

When ye shall rend that veil of unbelief, when you shall "hear Him," for to "hear Him" is to rend the veil of unbelief, that will bring forth Joseph Smith who will bring forth the sealed portion, the redemption and building of New Jerusalem will take place etc.

How does one rend the veil of unbelief?

My experience has been most members don't even know what the veil of darkness or veil of unbelief is. They would be more inclined to confuse it with Lehi's dream of the Tree of Life and the "mists of darkness." They would confuse the mists of darkness, which are Satan's offensive tools (i.e., "temptations"), with the veil of darkness/unbelief which is a self-inflicted wound; if members would rid themselves of the veil of darkness/unbelief Satan's mists of darkness would have no effect on us, that's the entire point of Lehi's vision. Those that held to the iron rod, which is the Word of God, were not lost in the mists of darkness. The cause of the self-inflicted wound, "the veil of unbelief," is caused by neglecting the Word of God, by the act of letting go of the iron rod. So when you think of the veil of unbelief/darkness think "people letting go of the iron rod" (or simply put, they are not grounded in the scriptures).

**Doctrine and Covenants 93**

**26** ***The Spirit of truth is of God. I am the Spirit of truth,*** and John bore record of me, saying: ***He received a fulness of truth, yea, even of all truth;***

**27** ***And no man receiveth a fulness unless he keepeth his commandments.***

**28** ***He that keepeth his commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things.***

**29** Man was also in the beginning with God. ***Intelligence, or the light of truth,*** was not created or made, neither indeed can be.

**30** All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence.

**31** Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man; because that which was from the beginning is plainly manifest unto them, and they receive not ***the light.***

**32** And every man whose spirit receiveth not ***the light*** is under condemnation.

**36** ***The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth.***

**37** ***Light and truth forsake that evil one.***

**39** ***And that wicked one cometh and taketh away light and truth, through disobedience, from the children of men, and because of the tradition of their fathers.***

**40** ***But I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 84**

**43** And I now give unto you a commandment to beware concerning yourselves, to give diligent heed ***to the words of eternal life.***

**44** ***For you shall live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God.***

**45** ***For the word of the Lord is truth, and whatsoever is truth is light, and whatsoever is light is Spirit, even the Spirit of Jesus Christ.***

**46** ***And the Spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the world; and the Spirit enlighteneth every man through the world, that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit.***

**47** ***And every one that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit cometh unto God, even the Father.***

**48** And the Father teacheth him of the covenant which he has renewed and confirmed upon you, which is confirmed upon you for your sakes, and not for your sakes only, but for the sake of the whole world.

**Doctrine and Covenants 112**

**22** Inasmuch as they shall humble themselves before me, ***and abide in my word, and hearken to the voice of my Spirit.***

**23** Verily, verily, I say unto you, ***darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the people, and all flesh has become corrupt before my face.***

**24** Behold, vengeance cometh speedily upon the inhabitants of the earth, a day of wrath, a day of burning, a day of desolation, of weeping, of mourning, and of lamentation; and as a whirlwind it shall come upon all the face of the earth, saith the Lord.

**25** And upon my house shall it begin, and from my house shall it go forth, saith the Lord;

**26** First among those among you, saith the Lord, who have professed to know my name and have not known me, and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house, saith the Lord.

The iron rod is the Word of God, holding fast to that iron rod is to hear the voice of the Savior, it is to receive of light and truth. The act of letting go of the iron rod is an act of disobedience, an act of disbelief, for if one actually believed in the Word of God in its literal plainness, if one actually believed in the power of those Words, they would not have let go of it. The act of people letting go of the iron rod and "leaning unto their own understanding/personal revelation" is the veil of unbelief, it is the veil of darkness, and when light and truth leaves the mind due to disobedience, the wicked one comes and fills it with the mists of darkness or in other words, the temptations of the world. For many are called but few are chosen, and why are they not chosen? Because they have let go of the iron rod, they have created a veil of unbelief, and the wicked one has filled their minds and hearts with a love of the vain things of this world, and they don't learn the lessons they needed to learn for exaltation. The Lord explicitly warns of the consequences of us not accepting the light and truth, and the Lord "verily verily" warned parents of the consequences of not teaching their children.

Once again, in conclusion, letting go of the iron rod (which is there to give us light and truth) denies us the benefits of holding the iron rod, the main one being the ability to "hear Him," or "to have the guidance of the Holy Ghost." This condition of "letting go of the rod" is the veil of unbelief/darkness, and it puts us in a position of vulnerability, vulnerability which is then exploited by "the wicked one" with the temptation of the world (i.e., mists of darkness).

Going back to Lehi's dream, generally speaking, the field is the world, those that enter the church by baptism are those who have accepted of the presence of the Son, i.e., "the Light of Christ" while those who held fast to the iron rod which is the Word of God, His mind, the Holy Ghost, and pressed forward are those who obtain exaltation. If they come not "unto Christ," unto "the Word," the "iron rod," they suffer from the veil of unbelief/darkness.

This is made manifest today in members feasting on the opinions of men. This is made manifest by members choosing to disregard the scriptures. This is made manifest by people mocking the people of God who are holding fast to the Word in its literal plainness. We know that those who practice priestcraft are those who "set themselves up as a light to get gain and praise of the world" (2 Nephi 26:29), these are people who are suffering from the veil of darkness/unbelief (whether they realize it or not) but who go a step further, they seek to create "alternative paths to the tree and then sell tickets," meaning, they don't simply let go of the rod and wander away, they stick around and build "new rods," rods no longer made of iron but of wood, mud, and clay, and they call out to those holding the rod and claim "no, here is the way which leadeth to the tree!" and once people have let go of the rod and wandered over to their makeshift paths (opinions, spiritualization, dreams visions and pretended visitations of angels mingled with figurative interpretations etc.) they will charge them money. It isn't enough for these people to damn themselves, they seek (once again, whether they realize it or not) to damn others and make a living or "craft" off doing it.

There is no other way given, no other Word, no other rod of iron, we can only help people attach themselves to it. Hopefully members, once understanding this, will begin to understand why the Lord views priestcraft as such a damnable offense.

**2 Nephi 32**

> **3** ***Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, I said unto you, feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do.***
>
> **4** Wherefore, now after I have spoken these words, if ye cannot understand them it will be because ye ask not, neither do ye knock; wherefore, ye are not brought into the light, but must perish in the dark.
>
> **5** For behold, again I say unto you that if ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy Ghost, it will show unto you all things what ye should do.
>
> **6** Behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and there will be no more doctrine given until after he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh. …

I know that the Word of God is the mind of God. I know that the Holy Ghost is also the mind of God. I know that as we have faith in the Lord and His words, we will begin to "hear Him," and as we begin to hear Him that veil of unbelief/darkness will begin to depart from our minds and the Lord will find faith in the earth, as the brother of Jared, once again. I know that as we accept the Holy Ghost it will expand our minds and teach us line upon line, precept upon precept, until we are full of light and truth and when Christ appears to us in the flesh we shall see Him, for we shall be even as He is, for we shall have arrived at the tree and have partaken of its wonderful fruit.

Once enough of us are awake, once enough of us have the veil of unbelief/darkness removed, once the scales have fallen from our eyes, and we have the faith as the brother of Jared we will begin to see miracles. The understanding of last-day events and timelines, the revelations of John, I know truth after truth, miracle after miracle will begin to come forth as we begin to once again exercise faith in the Lord as did the Brother of Jared.

**Ether 4**

> **16** And then shall my revelations which I have caused to be written by my servant John be unfolded in the eyes of all the people. Remember, when ye see these things, ye shall know that the time is at hand that they shall be made manifest in very deed.

**Ether 4:16. The Revelation of John the Revelator**

> The brother of Jared and Nephi, the son of Lehi, were both given foreknowledge of the book of Revelation found in our present Bible (see also 1 Nephi 14:18–28). The sealed portion of the gold plates evidently describes the same general things, and thus will help us more fully understand John's revelation (see 2 Nephi 27:7).
>
> (*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (1996), PDF Version, p. 161)

I know the time period we are in, and therefore I know that this veil of unbelief/darkness has to start falling away ***now.*** (and I can now say I know it has happened). That means we have to have faith as the Brother of Jared, and if we don't know what that means, how can we ever emulate it? We can choose to be a part of the fulfillment of these miracles and prophesies in a positive light or a negative light; we can choose to survive the day, or we can choose to do what is required to be exalted in that day.

But what about those who won't believe? What about those who want to cling to the philosophies and precepts of men? What if you hear the words and you don't repent because you don't believe in their literal plainness? What about those that make war against the Word, the Covenant people of the Lord?

Going back in **Ether 4**:

> **8** And he that will ***contend against the word*** of the Lord, let him be accursed; and he that shall deny these things, let him be accursed; for unto them will I show no greater things, saith Jesus Christ; for I am he who speaketh.
>
> **9** And at my command the heavens are opened and are shut; and at my word the earth shall shake; and at my command the inhabitants thereof shall pass away, even so as by fire.
>
> **10** And he that ***believeth not my words*** believeth not my disciples; and if it so be that I do not speak, judge ye; for ye shall know that it is I that speaketh, at the last day.
>
> **11** But he that ***believeth these things which I have spoken, him will I visit*** with the manifestations of my Spirit, …

This is an important point of reference to know, and one we will get into next.

## The Power of the Lamb

Rending the veil of unbelief leads to the power of the Lamb descending.

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> ***We live in the day that "our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation." We have front-row seats to witness live what the prophet Nephi saw only in vision,*** that "the power of the Lamb of God" would descend "upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory."
>
> ***You, my brothers and sisters, are among those men, women, and children whom Nephi saw. Think of that!***
>
> Regardless of where you live or what your circumstances are, the Lord Jesus Christ is your Savior, and God's prophet Joseph Smith is your prophet. He was foreordained before the foundation of the earth to be the prophet of this last dispensation, when "nothing shall be withheld" from the Saints. Revelation continues to flow from the Lord during this ongoing process of restoration.
>
> ("Hear Him," General Conference, April 2020)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> As you study your scriptures during the next six months, I encourage you to ***make a list of all that the Lord has promised He will do for covenant Israel.*** I think you will be astounded! Ponder these promises. Talk about them with your family and friends. ***Then live and watch for these promises to be fulfilled in your own life.***
>
> ("Let God Prevail," General Conference, October 2020)

Those visions from Nephi are recorded in 1 Nephi 14 and will open up "the power of the Lamb." Let's go through it:

**1 Nephi 14:8–17**

> **8** And it came to pass that when the angel had spoken these words, he said unto me: ***Rememberest thou the covenants of the Father unto the house of Israel?*** I said unto him, Yea.

A **covenant**, according to *True to the Faith:*

> A covenant is a sacred agreement between God and a person or group of people. God sets specific conditions, and He promises to bless us as we obey those conditions. When we choose not to keep covenants, we cannot receive the blessings, and in some instances we suffer a penalty as a consequence of our disobedience.
>
> ("Covenant," *True to the Faith* (2004), p. 44)

Covenants are always received by ordinances performed by one in authority. Those "specific conditions" mentioned are the commandments, or the "thou shalt." One will always receive the blessings from obeying a commandment, however, one receives additional specific blessings when obeying commandments (in some cases the same commandments) after accepting the covenant via ordinance by one who is authorized. For example, I can be living the Law of Health and receiving those blessings tied to it, but I will not receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost until I additionally accept covenants through baptism, etc. If I have accepted the covenants through the ordinance of baptism and then broke the Law of Health, I not only forfeit the blessings tied to living the Law of Health, I also forfeit the blessings tied to keeping that covenant, in this case the Holy Ghost.

With this understanding, it should be clear to see just how much President Nelson has been laser focused in on this time period, especially as we continue in **1 Nephi 14**:

> **9** And it came to pass that he said unto me: Look, and behold that great and abominable church, which is the mother of abominations, whose founder is the devil.
>
> **10** And he said unto me: Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth.
>
> **11** And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters; and she had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people.

I've seen many "well educated" people erroneously claim things about this division, specifically that a lot of well-intended non-members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will make up and constitute a large section of "the Church of the Lamb." Almost always they use a single story from the New Testament to "prove" their point. The problem? They are using the story in the New Testament erroneously to be able to erroneously misinterpret the scriptures here in 1 Nephi 14, and no, a double negative doesn't somehow make a positive. They purport that there were "Christians" who were not a part of Christ's church and Christ had no qualms with them. This is simply put ***an ignorant understanding.***

In the New Testament Student Manual we read:

**Mark 9:38–40. "He That Is Not against Us Is on Our Part" (see also Luke 9:49–50)**

> Some people have wondered how to reconcile the Savior's statement, "He that is not against us is on our part" (Mark 9:40), with His statement, "He that is not with me is against me" (Matthew 12:30). These sayings can be understood by examining the context in which each was made. In the situation recorded in Matthew 12, the Pharisees said that the Savior cast out devils by the power of the devil. The Savior declared that He cast out devils by the power of God and that the Pharisees could not take a neutral position concerning Him: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Matthew 12:30; see the commentary for Matthew 12:30).
>
> The situation recorded in Mark 9:38–40 was different. Instead of Pharisees expressing their lack of belief in Jesus's power, a man who clearly believed in Jesus was casting out devils. However, the Apostle John expressed concern about the man: "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us" (Mark 9:38).
>
> **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** suggested reasons for John's concern by explaining that the man "was not one of the inner circle of disciples who traveled, ate, slept, and communed continually with the Master. Luke has it: 'He followeth not *with* us' [Luke 9:49; italics added]; that is, he is not one of our traveling companions. But from our Lord's ***reply it is evident that he was a member of the kingdom, a legal administrator who was acting in the authority of the priesthood and the power of faith.*** Either he was unknown to John who therefore erroneously supposed him to be without authority or else John falsely supposed that the power to cast out devils was limited to the Twelve and did not extend to all faithful priesthood holders. It is quite possible that the one casting out devils was a seventy [see Luke 10:1, 17]" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 1:417).
>
> ***The Savior's answer to John, recorded in Mark 9:40, reassured John and the Twelve that the man was a disciple with authority, though not an Apostle.***
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual* (2018))

There will only be two churches, and as Brother Hyrum Andrus correctly explained in his lecture, (Nephi's Prophecy of the Last Days Part One), the Church of the Lamb is the righteous element ***within*** The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This is not a "larger group than we realize, consisting of all sorts of Christian denominations"—it is a righteous group, the righteous element, within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Period.

Going back to **1 Nephi 14**:

> **12** And it came to pass that I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and ***its numbers were few,*** because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that ***the church of the Lamb,*** who ***were the saints of God,*** were also upon all the face of the earth; and their dominions upon the face of the earth ***were small,*** because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw.

We need to take a moment to realize that these events could not have possibly happened pre-WWII, pre-The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints going global. Before that time period the policy of the church was for all converts to immigrate to America. We need to grasp this or we might not understand the next points of reference!

> **13** And it came to pass that I beheld that the great mother of abominations did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, ***to fight against the Lamb of God.***

Has this happened for the Saints of The Lamb worldwide post the church going global? It has not.

**President Nelson** also warned of this time period shortly to come:

> The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do (see Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7). ***Our safest insurance is to continue to be worthy of admission to His holy house***... We have great cause for concern. But we do not need to let our fears displace our faith. We can combat those fears by strengthening our faith.
>
> Why do we need such resilient faith? ***Because difficult days are ahead. Rarely in the future will it be easy or popular to be a faithful Latter-day Saint. Each of us will be tested. The Apostle Paul warned that in the latter days, those who diligently follow the Lord "shall suffer persecution"*** (2 Timothy 3:12). That very persecution can either crush you into silent weakness or motivate you to be more exemplary and courageous in your daily lives... Do whatever it takes to strengthen your faith in Jesus Christ by increasing your understanding of the doctrine taught in His restored Church and by relentlessly seeking truth. Anchored in pure doctrine, you will be able to step forward with faith and dogged persistence and cheerfully do all that lies in your power to fulfill the purposes of the Lord. You will have days when you will be discouraged. So pray for courage not to give up! Sadly, some whom you thought were your friends will betray you. And some things will simply seem unfair.
>
> ("The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior's Second Coming," *Ensign,* April 2020)

Back to **1 Nephi 14**:

> **14** And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.

Let's take a moment to stop and read what **Elder Orson Pratt** had to say about this, after reading the above set of scriptures in 1 Nephi 14, this is what Elder Orson Pratt taught:

> What is it that is going to increase righteousness and the power of God upon the Saints that are scattered abroad upon the face of the earth? It is the increase of righteousness here at headquarters; and as branches of the great vine of the same Church, they will feel the influence of the same Spirit, even before the intelligence can reach them by letter. When you reform and turn away from your sins—when you practice righteousness here, the Saints of God abroad feel stirred up to do the same things, and the Spirit of the Lord rests upon them the same as it does upon the people here, only not to the same extent, because you live at head quarters, at the fountainhead, and you have a greater experience; therefore, your experience, righteousness, and faithfulness, entitle you to more choice gifts than those that have not the same experience.
>
> The power of God will rest upon the Saints of these valleys ***first,*** and then upon the Saints in all the world, just in proportion to their righteousness. The Lord is going to increase power ***here among the people.*** Have we any dangerous circumstances to pass through that render it necessary that more power should be made manifest? Have we got to bear testimony to kings and to the rulers of the earth at the present time? No, we are not called to do this; but those who are in the nations abroad may have this to do.
>
> ("Testimony of God's Servants Faithfully Borne to the Nations—Gentile Opposition—Judgments of God—Redemption of Zion," *Journal of Discourses,* Volume 6, Discourse 30)

Finishing our reading of **1 Nephi 14**:

> **15** And it came to pass that I beheld that the wrath of God was poured out upon that great and abominable church, insomuch that there were wars and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth.
>
> **16** And as there began to be wars and rumors of wars among all the nations ***which belonged to the mother of abominations*** the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold, the wrath of God is upon the mother of harlots; and behold, thou seest all these things—
>
> **17** ***And when the day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon the mother of harlots,*** which is the great and abominable church of all the earth, whose founder is the devil, then, at that day, the work of the Father shall commence, in ***preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants,*** which he hath made to his people who are of the house of Israel.

The "power of the Lamb" is tied directly to the Redemption of Zion in this period of war, which will be gone over in subsequent chapters. It is what will save the covenant people of the Lord during this time period.

## The Power of the Lamb (Knowledge)

Going back to President Nelson's "Hear Him" talk, he referenced 1 Nephi 14, but then referenced Doctrine and Covenants 121 verse 27 and then referenced Doctrine and Covenants 121 verse 28. The chapter subheading for those verses reads: *"Glorious revelations promised those who endure valiantly."* What are these glorious revelations and when are they to come?

**Doctrine and Covenants 121**

> **26** God shall give unto you knowledge by his Holy Spirit, yea, by the unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost, that has not been revealed since the world was until now;
>
> **27** Which our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation to be revealed in the last times, which their minds were pointed to by the angels, as held in reserve for the fulness of their glory;
>
> **28** A time to come in the which nothing shall be withheld, whether there be one God or many gods, they shall be manifest.
>
> **29** All thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, shall be revealed and set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ.
>
> **30** And also, if there be bounds set to the heavens or to the seas, or to the dry land, or to the sun, moon, or stars—
>
> **31** All the times of their revolutions, all the appointed days, months, and years, and all the days of their days, months, and years, and all their glories, laws, and set times, shall be revealed in the days of the dispensation of the fulness of times—
>
> **32** According to that which was ordained in the midst of the Council of the Eternal God of all other gods before this world was, that should be reserved unto the finishing and the end thereof, when every man shall enter into his eternal presence and into his immortal rest.

**Doctrine and Covenants 121:26–33. "God shall give unto you knowledge"**

> The **Prophet Joseph Smith** taught: "The dispensation of the fullness of times will bring to light the things that have been revealed in all former dispensations; also other things that have not been before revealed" (*Teachings: Joseph Smith,* 510–11). And on another occasion he wrote that this dispensation is "a day in which God has begun to make manifest and set in order in His Church those things which have been, and those things which the ancient prophets and wise men desired to see but died without beholding them; a day in which those things begin to be made manifest, which have been hid from before the foundation of the world, and which Jehovah has promised should be made known in His own due time unto His servants, to prepare the earth for the return of His glory, even a celestial glory, and a kingdom of Priests and kings to God and the Lamb, forever, on Mount Zion" (*Teachings: Joseph Smith,* 510).
>
> This outpouring of knowledge began at the beginning of the Restoration and will continue into the Millennium, when "the Lord ... shall

reveal all things" (D&C 101:32) and "nothing shall be withheld" (D&C 121:28). **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** (1915–1985) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles described the knowledge that will be revealed during the Millennium:

"We have the fulness of the everlasting gospel, meaning that we have all that is needed to gain the fulness of salvation. We have every truth, doctrine, and principle, every rite, power, and ordinance—all that is needed—to gain exaltation in the highest heaven of the celestial world. But we do not know all things. …

"All things are to be revealed in the millennial day. The sealed part of the Book of Mormon will come forth; the brass plates will be translated; the writings of Adam and Enoch and Noah and Abraham and prophets without number will be revealed. We shall learn a thousand times more about the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus than we now know. We shall learn great mysteries of the kingdom that were not even known to those of old who walked and talked with the Eternal One. We shall learn the details of the creation and the origin of man. … Nothing in or on or over the earth will be withheld from human [knowledge], for eventually man, if he is to be as his Maker, must know all things" (*The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man* [1982], 675–77).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (2018))

**Joseph Smith** taught:

The spirit of Elias is first, Elijah second, and Messiah last. Elias is a forerunner to prepare the way, and the spirit and power of Elijah is to come after, holding the keys of power, building the Temple to the cap stone, placing the seals of the Melchisedec priesthood upon the house of Israel, and making all things ready, then Messiah comes to his temple, which is last of all. Messiah is above the spirit and power of Elijah for he made the world, and was that spiritual rock unto Moses in the Wilderness. Elijah was to come and prepare the way and build up the kingdom, before the coming of the great day of the Lord, although the spirit of Elias might begin it.

(*History,* 1838–1856, volume E–1 [1 July 1843–30 April 1844])

So how do we know the Spirit of Elijah is fulfilled and we are moving into Messiah?

**Doctrine and Covenants 128**

**17** … Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

**18** I might have rendered a plainer translation to this, but it is sufficiently plain to suit my purpose as it stands. It is sufficient to know, in this case, that the earth will be smitten with a curse unless there is a welding link of some kind or other between the fathers and the children, upon some subject or other—and behold what is that subject? It is the baptism for the dead. For we without them cannot be made perfect; neither can they without us be made perfect. Neither can they nor we be made perfect without those who have died in the gospel also; for it is necessary in the ushering in of the dispensation of the fulness of times, which dispensation is now ***beginning*** to usher in, that a whole and complete and perfect union, and welding together of dispensations, and keys, and powers, and glories should take place, and be revealed from the days of Adam even to the present time. ***And not only this, but those things which never have been revealed from the foundation of the world, but have been kept hid from the wise and prudent, shall be revealed unto babes and sucklings in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times.***

The revealing of this knowledge appears to be directly connected to the fulfillment of the Spirit of Elijah, which connects perfectly with the macro last-day timeline as this revealing occurs after the veil of unbelief is rent and directly before the New Jerusalem. But something else said here should prick our attention.

**President Nelson** said in his April 2021 General Conference opening remarks:

This last year has been one for the record books. No doubt we have each learned things we did not know previously. Some lessons that I knew before have been written on my heart in new and instructive ways.

For example, I know for sure that the Lord directs the affairs of His Church. He said, "I will show [you] that I am able to do mine own work."[1]

("Opening Remarks," General Conference, April 2021)

His footnote he provided takes us to:

**2 Nephi 27**

**21** Touch not the things which are sealed, for I will bring them forth in mine own due time; for I will show unto the children of men that I am able to do mine own work.

**23** For behold, I am God; and I am a God of miracles; and I will show unto the world that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever; and I work not among the children of men save it be according to their faith.

**24** And again it shall come to pass that the Lord shall say unto him that shall read the words that shall be delivered him:

**25** Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men—

**26** Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, ***for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.***

**29** And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.

**33** Therefore, thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.

**34** ***But when he seeth his children, the work of my hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.***

1. We obtain the Spirit of Elias (missionary work—opening our mouths)
2. We obtain the Spirit of Elijah (temple work)
3. Then we gain the Spirit of Messiah, the Power of the Lamb—which is directly tied to having faith as the Brother of Jared and rending the veil of unbelief

Is there a "knowledge" that is obtained through the "Spirit of Messiah," through "the Power of the Lamb"?

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Calling and Election

Now, there is some grand secret here, and keys to unlock the subject. Notwithstanding the apostle exhorts them to add to their faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, etc., yet he exhorts them to make their calling and election sure. And though they had heard an audible voice from heaven bearing testimony that Jesus was the Son of God, yet he says we have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light shining in a dark place. Now, wherein could they

have a more sure word of prophecy than to hear the voice of God saying, This is my beloved Son.

Now for the secret and grand key. Though they might hear the voice of God and know that Jesus was the Son of God, this would be no evidence that their election and calling was made sure, that they had part with Christ, and were joint heirs with Him. They then would want that more sure word of prophecy, that they were sealed in the heavens and had the promise of eternal life in the kingdom of God. Then, having this promise sealed unto them, it was an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast. Though the thunders might roll and lightnings flash, and earthquakes bellow, and war gather thick around, yet this hope and knowledge would support the soul in every hour of trial, trouble and tribulation. Then knowledge through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the grand key that unlocks the glories and mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

... Then I would exhort you to go on and continue to call upon God until you make your calling and election sure for yourselves, by obtaining this more sure word of prophecy, and wait patiently for the promise until you obtain it, etc.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 298–299)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Calling and Election to Be Made Sure

Contend earnestly for the like precious faith with the Apostle Peter, "and add to your faith virtue," knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity; "for if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Another point, after having all these qualifications, he lays this injunction upon the people "to make your calling and election sure." He is emphatic upon this subject—after adding all this virtue, knowledge, etc., "Make your calling and election sure." What is the secret—the starting point? "According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." How did he obtain all things? Through the knowledge of Him who hath called him. There could not anything be given, pertaining to life and godliness, without knowledge. Woe! woe! woe to Christendom!—especially the divines and priests if this be true.

Salvation is for a man to be saved from all his enemies; for until a man can triumph over death, he is not saved. A knowledge of the priesthood alone will do this.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 305)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Doctrines of Resurrection and Election

The Doctrines of the Resurrection of the Dead and the Eternal Judgment are necessary to preach among the first principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Doctrine of Election. Peter exhorts us to make our calling and election sure. This is the sealing power spoken of by Paul in other places.

"13. In whom ye also trusted, that after ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise,

"14. Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory, that we may be sealed up unto the day of redemption." —Ephesians, 1st chapter.

This principle ought (in its proper place) to be taught, for God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what He will make known unto the Twelve, and even the least Saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them, for the day must come when no man need say to his neighbor, Know ye the Lord; for all shall know Him (who remain) from the least to the greatest. How is this to be done? It is to be done by this sealing power, and the other Comforter spoken of, which will be manifest by revelation.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 149)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

How shall God come to the rescue of this generation? He will send Elijah the prophet. The law revealed to Moses in Horeb never was revealed to the children of Israel as a nation. Elijah shall reveal the covenants to seal the hearts of the father to the children, and the children to the fathers

The anointing and sealing is to be called, elected and made sure.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p.323)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

I know that His power ***is descending*** upon His covenant-keeping people, who are "armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory."

("The Answer Is Always Jesus Christ," General Conference, April 2023)

**Revelation 7:4–8. The Hundred and Forty-Four Thousand**

In Doctrine and Covenants 77:11 the Lord explained to Joseph Smith that the number 144,000 mentioned in Revelation 7:4–8 is the number of representatives out of the twelve tribes of Israel who will be ordained to assist others in their quest for exaltation (see the commentary for Revelation 14:1–5). It is not, as some people believe, the total number of people who will be exalted. "The church of the Firstborn" refers to those who will be exalted and become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ (D&C 77:11). Members of the Lord's earthly Church—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—who live righteously and receive the ordinances of exaltation will become members of the Lord's heavenly Church—the Church of the Firstborn (see D&C 93:20–22).

(*New Testament Student Manual* (2018))

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Most assuredly it is, however, that the ancients, though persecuted and afflicted by men, ***obtained from God promises*** of such weight and glory, that our hearts are often filled with gratitude that we are even permitted to look upon them [Calling and Election Made Sure] while we contemplate that there is no respect of persons in His sight, and that in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is acceptable with Him.[Faith as the Brother of Jared] But from the few items previously quoted we can draw the conclusion that there is to be a day when all will be judged of their works, and rewarded according to the same; that those who have kept the faith will be crowned with a crown of righteousness; ***be clothed in white raiment;*** be ***admitted to the marriage feast;*** be free from every affliction, and reign with Christ on the earth, where, ***according to the ancient promise,*** they will partake of the fruit of the vine new in the glorious kingdom with Him; at least we find that ***such promises were made to the ancient Saints. And though we cannot claim these promises which were made to the ancients for they are not our property, merely because they were made to the ancient Saints*** [Calling and Election Made Sure], yet if we are the children of the Most High, and are called with the same calling with which they were called, and embrace the same covenant that they embraced, and are faithful to the testimony of our Lord [Faith as the Brother of Jared] as they were, we can approach the Father in the name of Christ as they approached Him, and ***for ourselves obtain the same promises.***[16] [Faith as the Brother of Jared] These promises, when obtained, if ever by us, will not be because Peter, John, and the other Apostles, with the churches at Sardis, Pergamos, Philadelphia, and elsewhere, walked in the fear of God, ***and had power and faith to prevail*** and obtain them [Became "Israel," "Let God Prevail" or "Prevail with God"]; but it will be because we, ourselves, have faith and approach God in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, ***even as they did*** [Faith as the Brother of Jared]; and

***when these promises are obtained, they will be promises directly to us, or they will do us no good.*** They will be communicated for our benefit, ***being our own property*** (through the gift of God), earned by our own diligence in keeping His commandments and walking uprightly before Him. If not, to what end serves the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and why was it ever communicated to us?

**Footnotes**

16. Heb. 6:15, Ether 12:17, 21–22, D&C 45:14

("The Ancient Saints Obtained Promises," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 65–66)

**Hebrews 6**

**13** For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself,

**14** Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

**15** ***And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.***

**16** For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

**17** Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the ***heirs of promise*** the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

**18** That by two immutable things, ***in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation,*** who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

**19** ***Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;***

**20** Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

**Ether 12**

**17** And it was by faith that the three disciples obtained a promise that they should not taste of death; and they obtained not the promise until after their faith.

**18** And neither at any time hath any wrought miracles until after their faith; wherefore they first believed in the Son of God.

**19** And there were many whose faith was so exceedingly strong, even before Christ came, who could not be kept from within the veil, but truly saw with their eyes the things which they had beheld with an eye of faith, and they were glad.

**20** And behold, we have seen in this record that one of these was the brother of Jared; for so great was his faith in God, that when God put forth his finger he could not hide it from the sight of the brother of Jared, because of his word which he had spoken unto him, which word he had obtained by faith.

**21** And after the brother of Jared had beheld the finger of the Lord, because of the promise which the brother of Jared had obtained by faith, the Lord could not withhold anything from his sight; wherefore he showed him all things, for he could no longer be kept without the veil.

**22** And it is by faith that my fathers have obtained the promise that these things should come unto their brethren through the Gentiles; therefore the Lord hath commanded me, yea, even Jesus Christ.

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

**11** Wherefore, hearken ye together and let me show unto you even my wisdom—the wisdom of him whom ye say is the God of Enoch, and his brethren,

**12** Who were separated from the earth, and were received unto myself—a city reserved until a day of righteousness shall come—a day which was sought for by all holy men, and they found it not because of wickedness and abominations;

**13** And confessed they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth;

**14** But obtained a promise that they should find it and see it in their flesh.

## The Remnants of Jacob

So, who are these people who have obtained faith as the brother of Jared, who has rent the veil of unbelief, who have obtained the power of the Lamb, etc. and will be used by the Lord in this day to perform ***the*** Marvelous Work and Wonder?

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**55** And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take ***all the strength of mine house,*** which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, ***who are the strength of mine house,*** save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;

**56** And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard; for it is mine; I have bought it with money.

**57** Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen.

**58** And inasmuch as they gather together against you, avenge me of mine enemies, that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land.

**3 Nephi 21**

**8** And when that day shall come, it shall come to pass that kings shall shut their mouths; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

**9** For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and a marvelous work among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them.

**10** But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them. Yet I will heal him, for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.

**11** Therefore it shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words, who am Jesus Christ, which the Father shall cause him to bring forth unto the Gentiles, and shall give unto him power that he shall bring them forth unto the Gentiles, (it shall be done even as Moses said) they shall be cut off from among my people who are of the covenant.

**12** And ***my people who are a remnant of Jacob*** shall be among the Gentiles, yea, in the midst of them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he go through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

**13** Their hand shall be lifted up upon their adversaries, and all their enemies shall be cut off.

**14** Yea, wo be unto the Gentiles except they repent; for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Father, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots;

**15** And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strongholds;

**16** And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thy land, and thou shalt have no more soothsayers;

**17** Thy graven images I will also cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee, and thou shalt no more worship the works of thy hands;

**18** And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee; so will I destroy thy cities.

**19** And it shall come to pass that all lyings, and deceivings, and envyings, and strifes, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, shall be done away.

**20** For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel;

**21** And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.

**22** But if they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and ***be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance;***

**23** And they shall assist my people, ***the remnant of Jacob,*** and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.

**24** And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem.

**Ether 13**

**8** Wherefore, ***the remnant of the house of Joseph*** shall be built upon this land; and it shall be a land of their inheritance; and they shall build up a holy city unto the Lord, like unto the Jerusalem of old; and they shall no more be confounded, until the end come when the earth shall pass away.

**9** And there shall be a new heaven and a new earth; and they shall be like unto the old save the old have passed away, and all things have become new.

**10** And then cometh the New Jerusalem; and blessed are they who dwell therein, for it is they whose garments are white through the blood of the Lamb; and they are they who are numbered among ***the remnant of the seed of Joseph,*** who were of the house of Israel.

**11** And then also cometh the Jerusalem of old; and the inhabitants thereof, blessed are they, for they have been washed in the blood of the Lamb; and they are they who were scattered and gathered in from the four quarters of the earth, and from the north countries, and are partakers of the fulfilling of the covenant which God made with their father, Abraham.

**12** And when these things come, bringeth to pass the scripture which saith, there are they who were first, who shall be last; and there are they who were last, who shall be first.

**Doctrine and Covenants 87**

**4** And it shall come to pass, after many days, slaves shall rise up against their masters, who shall be marshaled and disciplined for war.

**5** And it shall come to pass also ***that the remnants who are left of the land will marshal themselves, and shall become exceedingly angry, and shall vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation.***

**6** And thus, with the sword and by bloodshed the inhabitants of the earth shall mourn; and with famine, and plague, and earthquake, and the thunder of heaven, and the fierce and vivid lightning also, shall the inhabitants of the earth be made to feel the wrath, and indignation, and chastening hand of an Almighty God, until the consumption decreed hath made a full end of all nations;

**7** That the cry of the saints, and of the blood of the saints, shall cease to come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, from the earth, to be avenged of their enemies.

**8** Wherefore, stand ye in holy places, and be not moved, until the day of the Lord come; for behold, it cometh quickly, saith the Lord. Amen.

**2 Nephi 20**

**20** And it shall come to pass in that day, ***that the remnant of Israel,*** and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them, but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.

**21** ***The remnant shall return,*** yea, ***even the remnant of Jacob,*** unto the mighty God.

**22** For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, ***yet a remnant of them shall return;*** the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness.

**23** For the Lord God of Hosts shall make a consumption, even determined in all the land.

**24** Therefore, thus saith the Lord God of Hosts: O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian; he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt.

**25** For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.

**26** And the Lord of Hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb; and as his rod was upon the sea so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** answered: "Who is the remnant of Jacob?"

In these chapters the Lord is speaking throughout of the remnant of Jacob. Who is Jacob whose remnant is to perform this great work in the last days? Most assuredly ***Jacob is Israel.*** Then again, when he speaks of the seed of Joseph, who is meant? Those who are descendants of Joseph, son of Israel, and this includes, of course, the Lamanites as well as the Ephraimites who are now being assembled and who are taking their place, according to prophecy, at the head to guide and bless the whole house of Israel. In his discourse the Savior states that the gentiles who are upon this land will be blessed, if they will receive the gospel, and they will be numbered with the house of Israel. The gentiles were to be a scourge to the remnant upon this land. Again, they were to be nursing fathers to them and this they are beginning to be in these latter-days, after the terrible scourging in former days. The gentiles were promised that they would be entitled to have all the blessings which were given to Israel, if they would repent and receive the gospel. All of this was seen in vision by Nephi and was stated by the Savior on the occasion of his visit to the Nephites. He also said that if the gentiles. not only upon this land, but also of all lands, did not repent he would bring the fulness of the gospel from among them. The remnant of the house of Israel spoken of in First Nephi, chapter 13, and Third Nephi, chapters 16, 20, and 21, does not have reference only to the descendants of Lehi, ***but to all the house of Israel, the children of Jacob, those upon this land and those in other lands.*** Reference to the gentiles also is to all the gentiles on this land and in other lands.

(*Doctrines of Salvation,* p. 372)

**Doctrine and Covenants 52**

**1** Behold, thus saith the Lord unto the elders whom he hath called and chosen in these last days, by the voice of his Spirit—

**2** Saying: I, the Lord, will make known unto you what I will that ye shall do from this time until the next conference, which shall be held in Missouri, upon the land which I will consecrate unto ***my people, which are a remnant of Jacob, and those who are heirs according to the covenant.***

We will get into more of what "the remnant" does in subsequent chapters, but for now simply realizing that this group is referred to as "the remnant" by the Lord and understanding what the Lord had reference to when he said it are all that is important.

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

Except for a few who are the humble followers of Christ, the Gentiles will not repent. They will revel in their abominations and sin against the restored gospel, and they will be burned by the brightness of our

> Lord's coming while the righteous—here called the remnant of Jacob—shall abide the day. And then, in the prophetic imagery, it will be as though the remnant of Israel overthrew their enemies as a young lion among the flocks of sheep.
>
> (*The Millenial Messiah,* p. 248)

## Like a Rose

**Doctrine and Covenants 49**

> **23** Wherefore, be not deceived, but continue in steadfastness, looking forth for the heavens to be shaken, and the earth to tremble and to reel to and fro as a drunken man, and for the valleys to be exalted, and for the mountains to be made low, and for the rough places to become smooth—and all this when the angel shall sound his trumpet.
>
> **24** But before the great day of the Lord shall come, Jacob shall flourish in the wilderness, and the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose.
>
> **25** Zion shall flourish upon the hills and rejoice upon the mountains, and shall be assembled together unto the place which I have appointed.

There really aren't many clearer breakdowns of last-day timelines in Holy Writ than this—let alone from the Lord himself! There are some key bits we should clearly be able to identify here, such as:

Zion shall flourish, being assembled unto ***the place*** which I have appointed (Doctrine and Covenants 101:20, Doctrine and Covenants 57:1–4) → **Before** → Mount of Olives (valleys exalted and mountains made low, Revelation 16:20)

And

The angel shall sound his trumpet → **Before** → heavens to be shaken, etc., etc.

Both of these points will be covered extensively in The Maco Last-day Timeline. There is another point here, however, that we need to address in this chapter, because it relates directly to this generation:

Jacob shall flourish in the wilderness and the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose → **before** → Zion is assembled unto the place which I have appointed.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Our lives have already become jeopardized by revealing the wicked and blood thirsty purposes of our enemies; and for the future we must cease to do so; all we have said about them is truth, but it is not always wise to relate such truth. Even Jesus the Son of God had to refrain from doing so, and to restrain his feelings many times for the safety of his own person and those of his followers, and had to conceal the righteous purposes of his heart in relation to many things pertaining to his father's Kingdom. When quite a boy he had all the intelligence necessary to rule and govern the Kingdom of the Jews, and could reason with the wisest and most profound doctors of law and divinity, and make their theories and practice to appear like folly compared with the wisdom he possessed, but he was a boy only, and lacked physical strength even to defend his own person, and was subject to cold, to hunger, and to death. So it is with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; we have the principles of revelations and the knowledge within us is sufficient to organize a righteous government upon the earth, and to give universal peace to all mankind if they will receive it; but we lack the physical strength as did our Savior when a child, to defend our principles, and we shall have of necessity to be afflicted, persecuted, and smitten, and to bear it patiently ***until Jacob is of age;*** then he will take care of himself.
>
> (*Joseph Smith Papers,* Historian's Office, Martyrdom Account page 53. "Not Always Wise to Expose Evil" Thursday, a.m.—June 27, 1844.—From Teachings of Joseph Smith)

**Doctrine and Covenants 105**

> **9** Therefore, in consequence of the transgressions of my people, it is expedient in me that mine elders should wait for a little season for the redemption of Zion—
>
> **10** ***That they themselves may be prepared, and that my people may be taught more perfectly, and have experience, and know more perfectly concerning their duty, and the things which I require at their hands.***
>
> **11** ***And this cannot be brought to pass until mine elders are endowed with power from on high.***
>
> **12** For behold, I have prepared a great endowment and blessing to be poured out upon them, inasmuch as they are faithful and continue in humility before me.
>
> **13** Therefore it is expedient in me that mine elders should wait for a little season, for the redemption of Zion.

This is "Jacob flourishing in the wilderness," *wilderness* being a state of being cast out from their land of promise. Once the remnant of Jacob obtains this power, they will be able to stand, and they will be ready for the Redemption of Zion and for Zion to be assembled unto the place the Lord has appointed.

But what of "the Lamanites blossoming as a rose"?

**Elder Orson Pratt** (1875)

> The Lord has commenced the gathering and restitution of the house of Israel among the very lowest specimens of humanity, and he will raise them up first, to carry on his great and marvelous work. The tens of thousands of Ephraim, and the thousands of Manasseh, will push the people together to the ends of the earth. (Deut. 33:17) Ephraim will not do the work alone, but ***he will be assisted by Manasseh. The Indians, the Lamanites,*** who will take hold in this great latter-day work, are the horns of Joseph.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* 18:155; Orson Pratt, Book of Mormon, Etc.)

**President Kimball** (1953)

> The Lamanite is the forgotten man, and though there has been much progress and though there have been friends raised up to him, he still is the forgotten man and is in need of assistance. It seems to me that if the Lord Jesus Christ were here with us in person, he would emphasize the work among these people. I remember that as early as July 1828, the Lord said:
>
> Doctrine and Covenants 3
>
> 16 Nevertheless, my work shall go forth, for inasmuch as the knowledge of a Savior has come unto the world, through the testimony of the Jews, even so shall the knowledge of a Savior come unto my people—
>
> 17 And to the Nephites, and the Jacobites, and the Josephites, and the Zoramites, through the testimony of their fathers—
>
> 18 And this testimony shall come to the knowledge of the Lamanites, and the Lemuelites, and the Ishmaelites, who dwindled in unbelief because of the iniquity of their fathers, whom the Lord has suffered to destroy their brethren the Nephites, because of their iniquities and their abominations.
>
> 19 And for this very purpose are these plates preserved, which contain these records—that the promises of the Lord might be fulfilled, which he made to his people;
>
> 20 And that the Lamanites might come to the knowledge of their fathers, and that they might know the promises of the Lord, and that they may believe the gospel and rely upon the merits of Jesus Christ, and be glorified through faith in his name, and that through their repentance they might be saved. Amen
>
> A little later in the same year, 1828, the Lord seemed to have this on his mind, as he dictated:

Doctrine and Covenants 10

47 And I said unto them, [the holy prophets of the Book of Mormon] that it should be granted unto them according to their faith in their prayers;

48 ... that my gospel ... might come unto their brethren the Lamanites, and also all that had become Lamanites because of their dissensions

In September 1830, the Lord said:

Doctrine and Covenants 28

8 And now, behold, I say unto you that you shall go unto the Lamanites and preach my gospel unto them; and inasmuch as they receive thy teachings thou shalt cause my church to be established among them...

That same month, through the Prophet Joseph, the Lord said to the Whitmers to go with Oliver Cowdery,

Doctrine and Covenants 30

6 ... for I have given unto him power to build up my church among the Lamanites

And again in October of that year, he revealed, "And Ziba Peterson also shall go with them," that is, with Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, and Parley P. Pratt, "and I myself will go with them and be in their midst; and I am their advocate with the Father, and nothing shall prevail against them" D&C 32:3

Then in March 1831, through the Prophet there came a revelation to Sidney Rigdon, Parley P. Pratt, and Leman Copley—

But before the great day of the Lord shall come, Jacob shall flourish in the wilderness, and the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose D&C 49:24

...

The Prophet Joseph Smith in 1841 was receiving a great many Indian chiefs and their groups in Nauvoo. They came over on the ferryboat and two flatboats to see the Prophet Joseph. And he says:

...

Now, all through the Doctrine and Covenants, all through those early years, it would seem that the Lord intended that the work among these great people should not be hampered or delayed but should go forward without any delay.

President John Taylor said, and I have quoted this before,

The work among the Lamanites must not be postponed, if we desire to retain the approval of God. Thus far we have been content simply to baptize them, let them run wild again, but this must continue no longer. The same devoted effort, the same care and instruction, the same organization and priesthood must be introduced and maintained among the house of Lehi as amongst those of Israel gathered from Gentile nations. As yet God has been doing all and we comparatively nothing. He has led many of them to us and they have been baptized, and now we must instruct them further, organize them into churches with proper presidencies, attach them to our stakes, organizations, etc., in one word, treat them exactly in these respects, as we would and do treat our white brethren. (The Gospel Kingdom, John Taylor, p. 247)

...

But a new day is dawning. The Lamanites are putting on their beautiful garments; they have made much progress with our limited assistance and much on their own. We have the priesthood among them. Many hundreds are occupied now in positions of responsibility. The Church has been established among them, to a limited degree, and we hope that it will continue. There are Lamanite wards and branches in many parts of the Church. In the islands of the sea, of course, this is a program extending over a century. But here among the Lamanites, as Brother Cowley said so beautifully last night in our Sunday School conference, it is rather a new thing. We have baptized this year 2500 Lamanites in the Church, and we have now approximately 45,000 of them on the records of the Church. We have in the El Paso Third Ward a Lamanite bishop, a high priest in the Church, and you should have seen the tears of joy of his people as he was installed in this high and important place.

...

In the Mexican Mission we have the advisory council, twelve strong, faithful men. We have district presidencies and branch presidencies, and it was the privilege of Brother McConkie and myself in November to meet with many of these groups of branch presidencies, and in their very humble circumstances they sat and with their books and pencils were taking notes of suggestions which we gave them as to the conduct of branches and districts in the organization and teaching of their people. These branch presidencies and these Lamanite bishops are interviewing people as to their worthiness and they have the power to withhold or to give temple blessings and other Church privileges to their members.

All through the Lamanite world we have leaders, and they are emerging now with greater strength and power. We have in the Mexican Mission forty-five young people who are filling full-term missions in addition to the fifty white boys and girls from other areas. There soon will be a preponderance of Spanish-speaking missionaries in that field. They are being supported by the special missionary fund of the Presidency of the Church and by individual donors who are helping them.

Down in the Navajo area, we have branch presidencies now who are conducting sacrament meetings, who are leading, who are speaking, who are praying, and we have "singing mothers" groups among them. It is glorious to see them growing and expanding and coming into their own. The work is developing among them. A great need is missionaries. In Mexican cities we met in groups where we had as many as two or three hundred people, hungering and thirsting for the word of the Lord, and three-fourths of them were not members of the Church.

We have branches down in Navajo land and Hopi land, with 105, 140, 160 members of the Church carrying on in normal fashion. This coming from what were termed the primitive Indians yesterday is a great advance, and we are grateful for it.

Temple work is going forward. Through the work of Sister Ivy Huish Jones, wife of the mission president in the Spanish-American Mission, 10,000 sheets of family groups have been prepared, and all through the Spanish-speaking missions the work is going forward.

It would do your heart good to see numbers of Lamanite brothers and sisters sealed in the temple. Seventeen couples in San Antonio alone have been sealed in the temple, fifty-three in this small El Paso Ward have been to the temple and had their endowments; 281 people in the Mexican Mission, coming as far as a thousand miles have had their endowments in the holy temple. It is a great joy to see the Hawaiian Temple as I saw it one day filled with Japanese members doing their work, and all of the workers in the temple were Lamanites—Samoans and Hawaiians.

("The Lamanites Are Progressing," *Improvement Era,* June 1953)

**President Marion G. Romney** (1963)

To you who wonder, I have just greeted and welcomed our people from Latin America. My Spanish may not have been such as they could understand, but you are in no position to challenge my interpretation of it.

I love these, my brothers and sisters. To me they are white and delightsome (2 Ne. 30:6) And of course I love you, too.

Pursuant to assignment from the First Presidency of the Church, I have for the past two years been supervising the Latin American missions. It may not, therefore, be wholly inappropriate for me to say something about the Lamanites, many of whom live in these missions. With this intent, I take for my text the following statement made by the Lord to the Prophet Joseph Smith in March 1831.

"... before the great day of the Lord shall come, Jacob shall flourish in the wilderness, and the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose" D&C 49:24

The word, "Lamanites," denotes, of course, the descendants of rebellious Laman and Lemuel. It also denotes all other descendants of Lehi who defected to them. As used in our text, I think it includes all descendants of Book of Mormon peoples frequently referred to as the remnant of the people of Lehi. The Lord identifies them in the Doctrine and Covenants as "... the Nephites ... Jacobites ... Josephites ... Zoramites ...

"... Lamanites ... Lemuelites, and ... Ishmaelites" (D&C 3:17-18) "The great day of the Lord" will, of course, be the day when the Savior comes in his power and glory to inaugurate a reign of righteousness and peace.

...

"But before the great day of the Lord shall come, Jacob shall flourish in the wilderness, and the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose" (D&C 49:22-24)

...

One of the two purposes of the Book of Mormon as expressed on its title page is "to show unto the remnant of the house of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever" (BM Title Page) "The remnant of the House of Israel" here referred to includes, of course, the Lamanites. It is concerning the covenants the Lord made with their fathers which run in favor of the Lamanites and culminate in their blossoming as the rose that I wish to speak.

One of these covenants was that a record of their fathers would be preserved and brought forth unto the remnant. Concerning this covenant, Enos said: "... after I had prayed and labored with all diligence, the Lord said unto me: I will grant unto thee according to thy desires ...

"And ... this was the desire which I desired ... that if it should so be, that my people, the Nephites, should fall into transgression, and by any means be destroyed, and the Lamanites should not be destroyed, that the Lord God would preserve a record of my people ... that it might be brought forth at some future day unto the Lamanites, that, perhaps, they might be brought unto salvation—

"... and he covenanted with me that he would bring them forth unto the Lamanites in his own due time" (Enos 1:12-13,16).

...

Concerning the timetable for the fulfillment of these tremendous prophecies, Jesus said: "... I give unto you a sign, that ye may know the time when these things shall be about to take place— ...

"... when these things which I declare unto you ... shall be made known unto the Gentiles ...

"... and shall come forth of the Father, from them unto ...

"... your seed ...

"And ... thy seed shall begin to know these things—it shall be a sign unto them, that they may know that the work of the Father hath already commenced unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he hath made unto the people who are of the house of Israel" (3 Ne. 21:1-3,5,7)

Now, with this foreknowledge as an interpretative guide to the signs of the times, all who have seeing eyes and understanding hearts may rest assured that the fulfillment of the promises to the Lamanites is at hand. Most of the foregoing prophecies have already been fulfilled, and others are now in course of fulfillment. The apostasy and fourth generation destruction, the degeneration of the remnant, the coming of the gentiles, their establishment by the power of God as a free people in this land, their harassment of the remnant, the preservation of the promised record, and its coming forth by way of the gentiles are now all documented history.

For more than a hundred years the record of their fathers, the Book of Mormon, has been going to the Lamanites by way of the gentiles. And it is now being carried to them with increased tempo.

Today the Church has in operation in lands inhabited, at least in part, by the remnant, twenty-one missions. Others are being organized. Working in these missions during 1962 were, on an average, 2,424 missionaries a month. These missionaries brought into the Church 22,909 people in 1962, an average of 9.45 a missionary. This is well above the average of other foreign missions of the Church. So you see, my brethren and sisters, the Lord is pouring out his spirit upon the Lamanites. They are accepting the record of their fathers and are coming to a knowledge of the "things" referred to by Jesus. It is true that they are poor, they are downtrodden; they are in large part uneducated. In these and many other respects they still suffer under the curse brought upon them by their apostasy from the gospel once so richly enjoyed and strictly obeyed by their fathers. But they are now accepting the gospel. And they will continue to accept it in ever-increasing numbers. As they receive and live it, they are certain to regain their favored status in the house of Israel and participate in the redemption of Zion and the building of the New Jerusalem here in America. Jacob, even now, flourishes in the wilderness, and shortly the "Lamanites shall blossom as the rose," heralding "the great day of the Lord" (D&C 49:24) which God grant may not be long delayed, I humbly pray.

("And the Lamanites Shall Blossom as the Rose," *Improvement Era,* June 1963)

**D&C 49:24–25. What Is Prophetic about These Verses?** (1981)

The ... prophecy is that "the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose" (v. 24). Today those of Lamanite descent are joining the Church in ever increasing numbers and are blossoming under the gospel light.

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), pp. 105–106)

Today (2023), "Manasseh... the Lamanites" have been gathered by Ephraim, their brother, to a degree that they are seeing "eye to eye." Indians, Mexicans, Polynesians, Latinos, etc. now are a massive part of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, with Spanish being the second most spoken language. There are more members outside the United States than inside the United States, and there are more temples in Mexico (24) than in all of Europe (22). Whether these converts are "true blood descendants of the Lamanites" (Manasseh) is irrelevant to the prophecy, for by blood or by adoption, they hold all the blessings and privileges of the tribe of Manasseh and thus are a part of the fulfillment of this prophecy.

## A Word of Caution

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

LATTER-DAY LAMANITE WORK MISUNDERSTOOD.

My attention has been called to statements in the Book of Mormon which some interpret to mean that the Lamanites will take the lead in building the temple and the New Jerusalem in Missouri. But I fail to find any single passage which indicates that this is to be the order of things when these great events are to be fulfilled.

Most of the passages used as evidence, in an attempt to prove that the Lamanites will take the lead and we are to follow, seem to come from the instruction given by our Lord when he visited the Nephites after his resurrection. Chapters 20 and 21 of Third Nephi are the main sources for this conclusion. But I fail to find in any of the words delivered by our Savior any declaration out of which this conclusion can be reached. It all comes about by a misunderstanding and an improper interpretation.

(*Doctrines of Salvation,* p. 372)

**3 Nephi 20:10–22. The Scattered Remnants of Israel**

"When the Lord is speaking of his covenants, he is not confining them to the descendants of Lehi, but applies them to all the house of Israel. 'And verily, verily, I say unto you, that when they [the covenants as recorded by Isaiah] shall be fulfilled then is the fulfilling of the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people, O house of Israel. And then shall ***the remnants,*** which shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, be gathered in from the east and from the west, and from the south and from the north; and they shall be brought to the knowledge of the Lord their God, who hath redeemed them. And the Father hath commanded me that I should give unto you this land, for your inheritance.' [3 Nephi 20:12–14.]

"Much of our misunderstanding, however, seems to come out of the interpretation placed upon the succeeding verses: 'And I say unto you, that if the Gentiles do not repent after the blessing which they shall receive, after they have scattered my people—Then shall ye, ***who are a remnant of the house of Jacob,*** go forth among them; and ye shall be in the midst of them who shall be many; and ye shall be among them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, and as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he goeth through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thy hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off. And I will gather my people together as a man gathereth his sheaves into the floor.' [3 Nephi 20:15–18.]

"Are we justified in applying this merely to the Lamanites and saying that they are to go forth as a young lion pouring out vengeance upon the gentiles? Also does the phrase, ***'Ye who are a remnant of the house of Jacob,'*** in verse 16, have reference just to the Lamanites? The verses which follow indicate that it has reference ***to the remnants of Israel,*** which had been scattered in all lands. To apply it to the Lamanites in face of the entire theme of this discourse, in my judgment, narrows it too greatly. Then again, this prophecy was also given to Micah and has reference to 'many people,' not merely to the gentiles on this land" (Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation,* 2:249–50).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (1996), PDF Version, pp. 142–143)

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

An occasional whiff of nonsense goes around the Church acclaiming that the Lamanites will build the temple in the New Jerusalem and that Ephraim and others will come to their assistance. This illusion is born of an inordinate love for Father Lehi's children and of a desire to see them all become now as Samuel the Lamanite once was. The Book of Mormon passages upon which it is thought to rest ***have reference not to the Lamanites but to the whole house of Israel.*** The temple in Jackson County will be built by Ephraim, meaning the Church as it is now constituted.

(*A New Witness,* p. 519)

## Why Joseph's Boys?

**Wandle Mace**

"Those who are your friends are my friends, and I promise you when I come again, I will lead you forth, so that where I am you shall be with me. Boys—he always called us 'his boys'—don't be sad, don't be cast down, I will come back again." After a little hesitation he added, "as soon as I can." That expression, "as soon as I can," sank deep into my heart and confirmed my fears. I never expected to see him again alive. The sad expression upon his face as he looked upon us, "his boys," for the last time I shall never forget. I felt in my inmost soul that he was going to be butchered, and we should see him no more alive.

(*Autobiography of Wandle Mace,* typescript, BYU Special Collections, pp. 145–146; *Autobiography of Wandle Mace,* typescript, BYU Special Collections, pp. 131–132, Joseph Smith, to the Nauvoo Legion the final time)

**Heber C. Kimball**

Take the boys here, the sons of our brethren and sisters, and you may cut them into inch pieces, and they will not forsake this cause, but they will defend it to the last. Some of them may be rough, and perhaps some of them do not pray much, but send them into the vineyard, and then you will see them shew forth the power that is in them. At present the Prophet Joseph's boys lay apparently in a state of slumber, everything seems to be perfectly calm with them, but by and by God will wake them up, and they will roar like the thunders of Mount Sinai.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 4, Discourse 1)

Joseph Smith called those he loved "his boys" or "Joseph's Boys." That is why we refer to ourselves as such—it is because we know that we get to know the Savior through Joseph Smith that we love him… To be "Joseph's Boys" we are part of the Lord's battalion… To those that understand, it is the same thing! If Joseph Smith felt comfortable enough saying/doing it, we think that is a good place to start the conversation!

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

The measure of a person's spiritual maturity is found in his or her loyalty to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

(Joseph Fielding McConkie, *The Bruce R. McConkie Story: Reflections of a Son* (2003), 256. See also Bruce R. McConkie, "Joseph Smith: A Revealer of Christ," BYU Devotional Address, 3 September 1978, 6.)

Why the "boys"? Does age have anything to do with it?

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**55** And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, ***my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants,*** who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;

**2 Nephi 27**

**25** Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men—

**26** Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, ***for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.***

**33** Therefore, thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.

**34** ***But when he seeth his children,*** the work of my hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.

**Doctrine and Covenants 128**

**18…And** not only this, but those things which never have been revealed from the foundation of the world, ***but have been kept hid from the wise and prudent, shall be revealed unto babes and sucklings in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 133**

**58** To prepare the weak for those things which are coming on the earth, and for the Lord's errand in the day ***when the weak shall confound the***

> ***wise, and the little one become a strong nation, and two shall put their tens of thousands to flight.***
>
> **59** And by the weak things of the earth the Lord shall thresh the nations by the power of his Spirit.

**Doctrine and Covenants 35**

> **13** Wherefore, ***I call upon the weak things of the world, those who are unlearned and despised, to thresh the nations by the power of my Spirit;***
>
> **14** ***And their arm shall be my arm,*** and I will be their shield and their buckler; and I will gird up their loins, and they shall fight manfully for me; and their enemies shall be under their feet; and I will let fall the sword in their behalf, and by the fire of mine indignation will I preserve them.

## Parable of the Thresher

We know the servant, he is Joseph Smith Jr. We know the strength of the Lord's House, they are the remnant or Jospeh's Boys. We know that they together will bring to pass the Marvelous Work and Wonder.

That said, there is an interesting period of time worth noting—the period of time between Joseph's Smith's return, Joseph's Boys being woken up, and them being "sent forth into the vineyard to roar like lions"... This period is covered in the parable of the thresher.

**Isaiah 28**

> **1** Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine!
>
> **2** Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand.
>
> **3** The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under feet:
>
> **4** And the glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, shall be a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer; which when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.
>
> **5** ¶ In that day shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people,
>
> **6** And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.
>
> **7** ¶ But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.
>
> **8** For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean.
>
> **9** Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.
>
> **10** For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:
>
> **11** For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.
>
> **12** To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.
>
> **13** But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.
>
> **14** ¶ Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem.
>
> **15** Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:
>
> **16** ¶ Therefore, thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste.
>
> **17** Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.
>
> **18** ¶ And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.
>
> **19** From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report.
>
> **20** For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.
>
> **21** For the LORD shall rise up as in mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.
>
> **22** Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth.

All of these verses deal with this specific time period... The time period between the drunkards of Ephraim, the damage to the olive trees (Doctrine and Covenants 101, which we will get into in the next chapters), standing in holy places and being not moved, "the hinge point" of line upon line, the desolating sickness which is paving the way for the overflowing scourge, those who have made covenants with death (wages of sin are death, to lift up your voice against the Lord's anointed is death, to trust in the arm of flesh is death, etc.)... But then the Lord does something amazing here, he gives a parable in the following verses that people really should pay attention to, as for many of us, we've personally experienced this the last few years... Says the Lord:

> **23** ¶ Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech.
>
> **24** Doth ***the plowman*** plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground?
>
> **25** When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat, and the appointed barley, and the rye ***in their place?***
>
> **26** For ***his God doth instruct him to discretion,*** and doth teach him.
>
> **27** For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument; neither is a cartwheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod.
>
> **28** Bread corn is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen.
>
> **29** This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.

The first thing we should easily be able to identify in this parable is "the plowman" and "his God who is instructing him to discretion"—these are none other than Joseph Smith Jr. and the Lord.

**President Brigham Young**

> Just at that time I had this dream, which I will now relate. I thought I had started and gone past the Hot Springs, which is about four miles north of this city. I was going after my goats. When I had gone round the point of the mountain by the Hot Springs, and had got about half a mile on the rise of ground beyond the Spring, whom should I meet but brother Joseph Smith. He had a wagon with no bed on, with bottom boards, and tents and camp equipage piled on. Somebody sat on the

wagon driving the team. Behind the team I saw a great flock of sheep. I heard their bleating, and saw some goats among them. I looked at them and thought—"This is curious, brother Joseph has been up to Captain Brown's and got my goats." There were men driving the sheep, and some of the sheep I should think were three and a half feet high, with large, fine, beautiful white fleeces, and they looked so lovely and pure; others were of moderate size, and pure and white; and in fact there were sheep of all sizes, with fleeces clean, pure and white. Then I saw some that were dark and spotted, of all colors and sizes and kinds, and their fleeces were dirty, and they looked inferior; some of these were a pretty good size, but not as large as some of the large fine clean sheep, and altogether there was a multitude of them of all sizes and kinds, and goats of all colors, sizes and kinds mixed among them. Joseph stopped the wagon, and the sheep kept rushing up until there was an immense herd. I looked in Joseph's eye, and laughed, just as I had many a time when he was alive, about some trifling thing or other, and said I—"Joseph, you have got the darndest flock of sheep I ever saw in my life; what are you going to do with them, what on earth are they for?" Joseph looked cunningly out of his eyes, just as he used to at times, and said he—***"They are all good in their places."***

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 18, Discourse 30, pp. 244–245)

What does this parable teach us?

**(15-15) Isaiah 28:23–29. What Was the Significance of the Parable of Sowing and Threshing?**

Keil and Delitzsch explained the beauty and power of Isaiah's parable, noting that "fitches" (Isaiah 28:25) were probably the black poppy, and cummin (see v. 25) the same as modern cummin. Both are herbs derived from the seeds of the plants mentioned.

"The ploughing … which opens the soil, i.e. turns it up in furrows, and the harrowing … which breaks the clods, take place to prepare for the sowing, and therefore not interminably, but only so long as is necessary to prepare the soil to receive the seed. When the seed-furrows have been drawn in the levelled surface of the ground … , then the sowing and planting begin; and this also takes place in various ways, according to the different kinds of fruit. … The wheat he sows carefully in rows … , i.e. he does not scatter it about carelessly, like the other two, but lays the grains carefully in the furrows, because otherwise when they sprang up they would get massed together, and choke one another … the barley is sown in a piece of the field specially marked off for it, or specially furnished with signs … ; and … , the spelt [rye] … , along the edge of it, so that spelt forms the rim of the barley field. It is by a divine instinct that the husbandman acts in this manner; for God, who established agriculture at the creation … , has also given men understanding. …

"… (For) [v. 27] introduces another proof that the husbandman is instructed by God, from what he still further does. He does not use the threshing machine … which would entirely destroy the more tender kinds of fruit, but knocks them out with a staff. … Is bread corn crushed? Oh no, he does not crush it. This would be the case if he were to cause the wheel … of the threshing cart with the horses harnessed in front to rattle over it with all their might. … The wise, divinely inspired course adopted by the husbandman in the treatment of the field and fruit, is a type of the wise course adopted by the divine Teacher Himself in the treatment of His nation. Israel is Jehovah's field. The punishments and chastisements of Jehovah are the ploughshare and harrow, with which He forcibly breaks up, turns over, and furrows this field. But this does not last for ever. When the field has been thus loosened, smoothed, and rendered fertile once more, the painful process of ploughing is followed by a beneficent sowing and planting in a multi-form and wisely ordered fulness of grace. Again, Israel is Jehovah's child of the threshing-floor [see Isaiah 21:10]. He threshes it; but He does not thresh it only: He also knocks; and when He threshes, He does not continue threshing for ever, i.e. as Caspari has well explained it, He does not punish all the members of the nation with the same severity; and those whom He punishes with greater severity than others He does not punish incessantly, but as soon as His end is attained, and the husks of sin are separated from those that have been punished, the punishment ceases, and only the worst in the nation, who are nothing but husks, and the husks on the nation itself, are swept away by the punishments' [compare Isaiah 1:25; 29:20–21]. This is the solemn lesson and affectionate consolation hidden behind the veil of the parable. Jehovah punishes, but it is in order that He may be able to bless. He sifts, but He does not destroy. He does not thresh His own people, but He knocks them; and even when He threshes, they may console themselves in the face of the approaching period of judgment, that they are never crushed or injured." (*Commentary,* 7:2:14–17.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), pp. 163–164)

**Luke 12**

**49** And the Lord said, I speak unto those whom the Lord shall make rulers over his household, to give his children their portion of meat in due season.

**50** And they said, Who then is that faithful and wise servant?

**51** And the Lord said unto them, It is that servant who watcheth, to impart his portion of meat in due season.

**52** Blessed be that servant whom his Lord shall find, when he cometh, so doing.

**53** Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

**54** But the evil servant is he who is not found watching. And if that servant is not found watching, he will say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and the maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken.

**55** The Lord of that servant will come in a day he looketh not for, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him down, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

**56** And that servant who knew his Lord's will and prepared not for his Lord's coming, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

**57** But he that knew not his Lord's will, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom the Lord has committed much, of him will men ask the more.

**58** For they are not well pleased with the Lord's doings; therefore, I am come to send fire on the earth; and what is it to you if I will that it be already kindled?

**59** But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished?

**60** Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

**61** For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

**62** The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

**Bible Hub**

Isaiah had to warn and admonish the chosen nation at a period in which they were utterly corrupt, when the judges took bribes and the priests mocked at the Word of the Lord, and the very prophets saw "lying visions," or pretended to see them, and the people had made a covenant with Death and Hades. He had to threaten them with disaster on disaster. So corrupt were they, however, that they made a jest of him for his fidelity to their King and God. In their drunken carousals the priests and prophets mimicked and burlesqued the simplicity and directness of his speech, and turned his warnings into a theme for laughter and derision. But even in this godless and scoffing age there was a "remnant" faithful

among the faithless, who were true to God and to the Word which He sent by the prophet. Were they to be consumed in the fire of the Divine indignation against the popular sins? Or, if they were preserved, were they to stand by and see the elect nation destroyed out of its place? Was there no hope for them? none even for the nation at large! There was hope; and that they might see it and be sustained by it in the cloudy and dark day of judgment, Isaiah discloses to them, in his parable, the secret of the Divine administration, namely, that judgment is mercy, and that it prepares the way for a mercy more open and full than itself. But the prophet has a message to the faithful remnant, as well as to the nation at large. And to them his message is, that even the good grain must be threshed, that even those who are faithful to Jehovah must share in the judgments which are about to fall on the entire nation. They cannot be exempted from the misery of the time; they must suffer, as for their own sins, so also for the sins of their neighbours. But this is their comfort, that the Divine Husbandman measures out His strokes with wisdom and grace. God is but separating that which is good in those whom He loves from that which is evil and imperfect in them; and, even in this process of separation, He will not lay upon them more than they are able to bear.

(S. Cox, D. D., "The Parable of the Ploughman and the Thresher," https://biblehub.com/sermons/auth/cox/the_parable_of_the_ploughman_and_the_thresher.htm)

**Elder L. Tom Perry**

The people of Alma were delivered from the hands of the Lamanites and safely made their way back to be united with the people of Zarahemla.

What was the difference between the people of Alma and the people of King Limhi? Obviously, there were several differences: the people of Alma were peaceful and more righteous; they had already been baptized and entered into a covenant with the Lord; they humbled themselves before the Lord even before their tribulations started. All these differences made it appropriate and fair that the Lord would deliver them quickly in a miraculous way from the hand which kept them in bondage. These scriptures teach us of the Lord's power of deliverance.

("The Power of Deliverance," General Conference, April 2012)

**Doctrine and Covenants 105**

**1** Verily I say unto you who have assembled yourselves together that you may learn my will concerning the redemption of mine afflicted people—

**2** Behold, I say unto you, were it not for the transgressions of my people, speaking concerning the church and not individuals, ***they might have been redeemed even now.***

**3** But behold, they have not learned to be obedient to the things which I required at their hands, but are full of all manner of evil, and do not impart of their substance, as becometh saints, to the poor and afflicted among them;

**4** And are not united according to the union required by the law of the celestial kingdom;

**5** And Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom; otherwise I cannot receive her unto myself.

**6** And my people must needs be chastened until they learn obedience, ***if it must needs be,*** by the things which they suffer.

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

HOW ZION MAY ESCAPE THE LORD'S SCOURGE.

"Nevertheless, Zion shall escape if she observe to do all things whatsoever I have commanded her. But if she observe not to do whatsoever I have commanded her, I will visit her according to all her works, with sore affliction, with pestilence, with plague, with sword, with vengeance, with devouring fire."

This way of escape, insuring the protection of the Lord, is a very simple one. Unfortunately, many of the people of Zion have refused to take advantage of this promise. As I observe conditions among the people I cannot see how we are going to escape when the judgments are to pass over the nations, which are promised in this revelation and in others which I cannot take time to read. Because of our disobedience and our failure to keep the commandments of the Lord, the righteous, as in times past, may be called upon to suffer with the unrighteous among us.

(*Doctrines of Salvation,* Volume 3, p. 31–32)

Disobedience Necessitates Suffering, which is gone over in great detail in Section One; A Sense of Urgency. We should know that we will only suffer as much as required to get the most out of us—if we humble ourselves early, "become the remnant," those righteous people that President Nelson committed us to become, we will not have to go through the same process of refinement. The thresher who is discerning knows exactly what has to be done to give us the best chance for exaltation, if we allow it. If we don't allow it, if we fight against the thresher and kick against the pricks, we shall with the wicked lift up our voices, curse God and die spiritually.

**3 Nephi 24**

**1** ... I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.

**2** But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap.

**3** And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

...

**16** Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

**17** And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

**18** Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

# The Redemption of Zion

"Awake, awake; put on thy streng*th, O Zion" – Isaiah 52:1*

## Introduction

**Brigham Young**

> ***When will Zion be redeemed?*** When will the Savior make His appearance in the midst of His people? When will the veil be taken away, that we may behold the glory of God? Can any of you answer these questions? Yes, readily, when I tell you. ***The redemption of Zion is the first step preparatory to the two last-named events.***
>
> Just as soon as the Latter-day Saints are ready and prepared to return to Independence, Jackson County, in the state of Missouri, North America, just so soon will the voice of the Lord be heard, "Arise now, Israel, and make your way to the Center Stake of Zion." We must be pure to be prepared to build up Zion.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 9, p. 138, July 28, 1861)

**Mosiah 12**

> **19** And they began to question him, that they might cross him, that thereby they might have wherewith to accuse him; but he answered them boldly, and withstood all their questions, yea, to their astonishment; for he did withstand them in all their questions, and did confound them in all their words.
>
> **20** And it came to pass that one of them said unto him: What meaneth the words which are written, and which have been taught by our fathers, saying:
>
> **21** How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings; that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good; that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth;
>
> **22** Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion;
>
> **23** Break forth into joy; sing together ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem;
>
> **24** The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God?
>
> **25** And now Abinadi said unto them: Are you priests, and pretend to teach this people, and to understand the spirit of prophesying, and yet desire to know of me what these things mean?
>
> **26** I say unto you, wo be unto you for perverting the ways of the Lord! For if ye understand these things ye have not taught them; therefore, ye have perverted the ways of the Lord.
>
> **27** Ye have not applied your hearts to understanding; therefore, ye have not been wise. Therefore, what teach ye this people?

## The Gathering of Israel and the Coming of the Messiah

**Isaiah 48–54** includes some of Isaiah's greatest work. Six of the seven chapters, slightly changed in some instances, are found in the Book of Mormon; ***the other chapter, chapter 52, is scattered throughout the sacred record. The Book of Mormon is, therefore, our greatest help in understanding this part of Isaiah's written work.***

1. If one could summarize President Nelson's entire focus down, would it not be "the gathering of Israel and the coming of the Messiah?"
2. If Isaiah 52 is scattered throughout the entirety of The Book of Mormon, which I testify that it is, would not the understanding of Isaiah 52 unlock the entire purpose, the entire theme, etc. of the entirety of The Book of Mormon?

**Isaiah 52**

> **1** Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.
>
> **2** Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

**(17-16) Isaiah 52:1–6. "Put on Thy Strength, O Zion"**

> As shown in Notes and Commentary on Isaiah 2:3, there ***will be*** two headquarters for the Lord and His people during the Millennium: Zion, the New Jerusalem, on the American continent; and Zion, the Old Jerusalem, in the Holy Land.
>
> Isaiah 52:1–2 is quoted in three places in the Book of Mormon (see 2 Nephi 8:24–25; 3 Nephi 20:36–37; Moroni 10:31) and once in the Doctrine and Covenants. In Doctrine and Covenants 113:7–8, Joseph Smith answered questions about the meaning of Isaiah 52:1–2. He showed that the beautiful garments symbolized the priesthood power restored to the house of Israel in the last days and that the loosing of the bands from her neck ***signified the removal of the curses of God. If Israel would return to God, new revelations would be given.***
>
> When the Savior cited passages from Isaiah 52, He omitted verses 4 and 5, perhaps these verses did not apply to the Nephites at that time (see 3 Nephi 20:36–40).
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition), 2003, pp. 195–196)

**Doctrine and Covenants 113**

> **7** Questions by Elias Higbee: What is meant by the command in Isaiah, 52d chapter, 1st verse, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion—and what people had Isaiah reference to?
>
> **8** He had reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of priesthood to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel; and to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage; also to return to that power ***which she had lost.***

**Moroni 10**

> **31** And awake, and arise from the dust, O Jerusalem; yea, and put on thy beautiful garments, O daughter of Zion; and strengthen thy stakes and enlarge thy borders forever, that thou mayest no more be confounded, ***that the covenants of the Eternal Father which he hath made unto thee, O house of Israel, may be fulfilled.***
>
> **32** Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is ***his grace*** sufficient for you, that by ***his grace*** ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by ***the grace of God*** ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God.
>
> **33** And again, if ye ***by the grace of God*** are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, ***then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God,*** through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot.
>
> **34** And now I bid unto all, farewell. I soon go to rest in the paradise of God, until my spirit and body shall again reunite, and I am brought

forth triumphant through the air, to meet you before the pleasing bar of the great Jehovah, the Eternal Judge of both quick and dead. Amen.

The literal final words of Moroni are a call for us to redeem Zion (v. 31), gives us the reason for it (that the covenants of the Eternal Father which he hath made unto thee, O house of Israel, may be fulfilled.) and then the blueprint for how to do it (v 32+)... As we as a group were fasting for the Redemption of Zion the Lord sent me a kitten and told us to name her "grace" (she was saved after all she could do) and now the Lord has brought me here...

No one should have any doubts where we are and no one should have any doubt where President Nelson knows we are... We are here to awake, AWAKE and redeem the Zion of our God—what does that mean, what does that look like? That is not only the purpose of this paper, it is the entire purpose, theme, etc. of The Book of Mormon. Before continuing in Isaiah 52 we need to have an understanding of what "the Redemption of Zion" means.

## I. What is Zion, Why does it need to be redeemed, Etc.?

**Articles of Faith**

**10** We believe in the literal gathering of Israel ***and*** in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion ***(the New Jerusalem) will be*** built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign ***personally*** upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.

**Doctrine and Covenants 57**

*Revelation given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, in Zion, Jackson County, Missouri, July 20, 1831. In compliance with the Lord's command to travel to Missouri, where He would reveal "the land of your inheritance" (section 52), the elders had journeyed from Ohio to Missouri's western border. Joseph Smith contemplated the state of the Lamanites and wondered: "When will the wilderness blossom as the rose? When will Zion be built up in her glory, and where will Thy temple stand, unto which all nations shall come in the last days?" Subsequently he received this revelation.*

**1** Hearken, O ye elders of my church, saith the Lord your God, who have assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments, in this land, which is the land of Missouri, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints.

**2** Wherefore, this is the land of promise, and the place for ***the city of Zion.***

**3** And thus saith the Lord your God, if you will receive wisdom here is wisdom. Behold, the place which is now called Independence is ***the center place;*** and a spot for the temple is lying westward, upon a lot which is not far from the courthouse.

**4** Wherefore, it is wisdom that the land should be purchased by the saints, and also every tract lying westward, even unto the line running directly between Jew and Gentile;

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**20** And, behold, there is none other [a]place appointed than that which I have appointed; ***neither shall there be any other place appointed*** than that which I have appointed...

The footnote (a) takes you to D&C 57:1–4 (see above).

**Chapter 21: Doctrine and Covenants 57–58**

Introduction and Timeline

In obedience to the Lord's command to convene a Church conference in Missouri (see D&C 52:2–5), the Prophet Joseph Smith and several others traveled approximately 900 miles from Ohio to Missouri. On July 20, 1831, a few days after arriving in Jackson County, Missouri, Joseph Smith received the revelation recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 57. In this revelation the Lord declared that Independence, Missouri, was to be the center place of the city of Zion and its temple, and He instructed several individuals regarding their roles in building Zion. ...

Doctrine and Covenants 57: Additional Historical Background

The **Prophet Joseph Smith** (1805–1844) taught that "the building up of Zion is a cause that has interested the people of God in every age; it is a theme upon which prophets, priests and kings have dwelt with peculiar delight" (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith [2011], 186). Many of the early Saints also eagerly anticipated the establishment of Zion. As part of the Restoration, the Lord provided the Saints with incremental revelation about the building up of the city of Zion upon the earth in the last days. For example, from the Book of Mormon the Saints learned that the city of Zion, or the New Jerusalem, would be located on the American Continent (see 3 Nephi 20:22; 21:23–24; Ether 13:2–10).

In a revelation given in September 1830, the Lord explained that He would not reveal the exact location of the city of Zion at that time but that it would be located "on the borders by the Lamanites" (D&C 28:9). In December 1830, as the Prophet Joseph Smith worked on his inspired translation of the Bible, he learned that during the troubled times of the last days, the Lord would preserve His people and gather them in the "Holy City" of Zion (see Moses 7:60–62). On February 9, 1831, the Lord explained that He would reveal "where the New Jerusalem shall be built" in His "own due time" (D&C 42:62). Just one month later, the Prophet received a revelation indicating that Zion would be "a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety" in a wicked world (D&C 45:66–67). The Saints' anticipation about Zion grew when in June 1831 the Lord commanded that the next Church conference "be held in Missouri, upon the land which I will consecrate unto my people" (D&C 52:2). In this same revelation the Lord promised to reveal "the land of [their] inheritance" if Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon remained faithful (D&C 52:5).

In obedience to the Lord's command to convene a Church conference in Missouri, the Prophet Joseph Smith and a few traveling companions left Kirtland, Ohio, to go there on June 19, 1831. In addition, the Lord called a number of priesthood holders to travel in pairs to Missouri and to preach the gospel as they traveled (see D&C 52:7–10, 22–33; 56:5–7). After traveling approximately 900 miles, the Prophet and his companions arrived first in Independence, Jackson County, Missouri, on July 14, 1831. There they were met by Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer Jr., and Ziba Peterson, who had been called in the fall of 1830 as missionaries to preach the gospel to the Lamanites (see D&C 28:8; 30:5–8; 32:2–3). These missionaries were accompanied by a recent convert to the Church, Frederick G. Williams, who asked Oliver Cowdery if he could join them in their travels.

According to Joseph Smith's history, when the Prophet arrived in Independence, he spent time contemplating the establishment of Zion and the situation of the American Indians living across the border of Missouri. His contemplation led him to wonder: "When will the wilderness blossom as the rose; when will Zion be built up in her glory, and where will thy Temple stand unto which all nations shall come in the last days?" (in Manuscript History of the Church, vol. A-1, page 127, josephsmithpapers.org). Subsequently, on July 20, 1831, the Prophet Joseph Smith received the revelation recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 57.

Doctrine and Covenants 57:1–3. The Lord declares the location of the city of Zion

In response to the Prophet Joseph Smith's inquiry, the Lord revealed that Independence, Jackson County, Missouri, was "the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion" (D&C 57:2). The site for the city of Zion was located just below a bend in the Missouri River and about 10 miles east of the Missouri-Indian territory line (currently the Missou-

ri-Kansas border). The land that makes up Missouri and several surrounding states had become part of the United States after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. After the purchase, new settlers, mostly from other southern states, moved into Missouri to settle the land. Missouri became a state in 1821, and in 1826 the state legislature created Jackson County. The newly settled town of Independence, which was located along a trade road called the Santa Fe Trail, became the county seat. At the time of this revelation, Jackson County had only a few hundred residents and a few public buildings, including the county courthouse.

### Doctrine and Covenants 57:3. "Independence is the center place"

When the Lord designated Jackson County, Missouri, as the place where the city of Zion would be built, He indicated that the city of Independence would be "the center place" (D&C 57:3). Being the center place refers, in part, to the role that Zion, or the New Jerusalem, will have as one of the two capitals (the other being Jerusalem) of the Lord's kingdom during the Millennium (see Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, comp. Bruce R. McConkie [1955], 3:71). From this location the Lord Himself will oversee the activity and processes of His kingdom.

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** (1915–1985) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles emphasized the importance of Zion as the "center place" when he taught the following: "Let Israel gather to the stakes of Zion in all nations. Let every land be a Zion to those appointed to dwell there. Let the fulness of the gospel be for all the saints in all nations. Let no blessing be denied them. Let temples arise wherein the fulness of the ordinances of the Lord's house may be administered. But still there is a center place, a place where the chief temple shall stand, a place to which the Lord shall come, a place whence the law shall go forth to govern all the earth. … And that center place is what men now call Independence in Jackson County, Missouri, but which in a day to come will be the Zion of our God and the City of Holiness of his people. The site is selected; the place is known; the decree has gone forth; and the promised destiny is assured" (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 595).

### Doctrine and Covenants 57:3. "A spot for the temple"

In addition to revealing the place for the city of Zion, the Lord also declared that the spot for the temple was "lying westward, upon a lot which is not far from the courthouse" (D&C 57:3). This temple will be built in the last days before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** explained the significance of the temple that will be built in Independence, Missouri: "As to the temple unto which all nations shall come in the last days, it shall be built in the New Jerusalem before the Second Coming, all as a part of the preparatory processes that will make ready a people for their Lord's return" (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith,* 595).

About two years after he received the revelation recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 57, the Prophet Joseph Smith received additional revelation concerning the spot where the temple would be constructed. In 1833, the Prophet had a plat map drawn for the city of Zion that depicted a temple complex of 24 buildings to be constructed next to each other in Independence (see *History of the Church,* 1:357–59). The gathering to and the building up of the city of Zion, or New Jerusalem, as declared by the Lord, will begin at "the place of the temple" (D&C 84:4).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual,* 2017, pp. 301–305)

## Chapter 39: Doctrine and Covenants 101

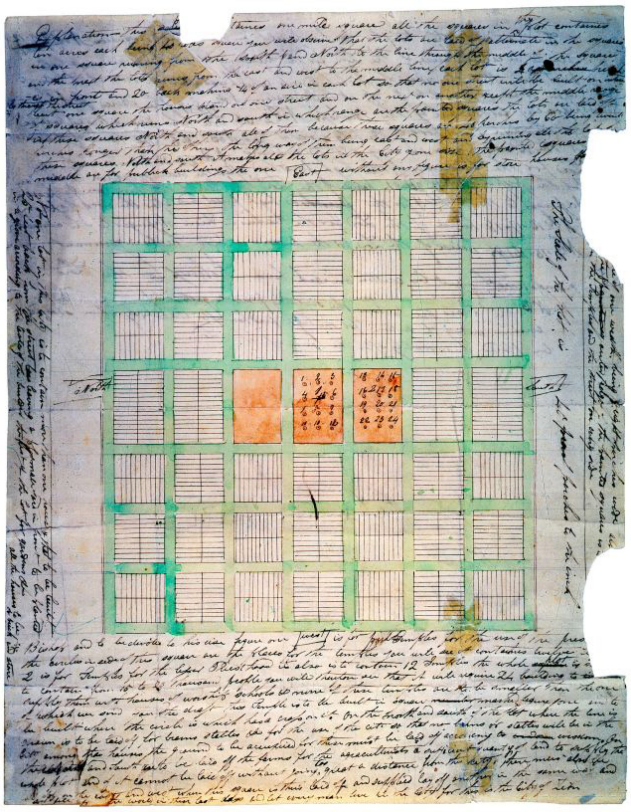
### Introduction and Timeline

In late 1833, mobs attacked Church members in Jackson County, Missouri, and forced them from their homes. When news of the violence reached the Prophet Joseph Smith in Kirtland, Ohio, he grieved for the Missouri Saints and pled with the Lord to return them to their lands and homes. On December 16–17, 1833, the Lord revealed to the Prophet why He had allowed His Saints to suffer. This revelation, which is recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 101, also included counsel and words of comfort regarding "the redemption of Zion" (D&C 101:43).

### Doctrine and Covenants 101: Additional Historical Background

Due to mob violence against the Saints in Jackson County, Missouri, during the summer of 1833, Church leaders there were forced to sign an agreement that half of the Saints would leave Jackson County by January 1, 1834, and the remainder would leave by April 1, 1834. However, in August 1833 the Prophet Joseph Smith and a council of Church leaders in Kirtland, Ohio, advised the Missouri Saints not to leave their homes and to ask the state government for help. In early October 1833, elders Orson Hyde and William W. Phelps met with Missouri governor Daniel Dunklin and requested help and protection for the Saints in Jackson County. The governor advised the Saints to seek help through the local courts. After Church leaders filed their suit in the Jackson County courts, the Saints prepared to defend themselves. (See *The Joseph Smith Papers, Documents, Volume 3: February 1833–March 1834,* ed. Gerrit J. Dirkmaat and others [2014], 386; *Church History in the Fulness of Times Student Manual,* 2nd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2003], 134–35.) …

The exiled Saints took refuge in temporary shelters along the north bank of the Missouri River in the midst of winter. Describing these awful conditions, **Parley P. Pratt** wrote:



**"The plat map for the City of Zion was prepared under the direction of the Prophet Joseph Smith and sent to the Saints in Missouri in June 1833, along with architectural plans for the first temple in Zion."**

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual,* 2017, p. 305)

"The shore [of the Missouri River] began to be lined on both sides of the ferry with men, women and children; goods, wagons, boxes, provisions, etc., while the ferry was constantly employed. … Hundreds of people were seen in every direction, some in tents and some in the open air around their fires, while the rain descended in torrents. Husbands were inquiring for their wives, wives for their husbands; parents for

children, and children for parents. Some had the good fortune to escape with their families, household goods, and some provisions; while others knew not the fate of their friends, and had lost all their goods. The scene was indescribable, and, I am sure, would have melted the hearts of any people on the earth, except our blind oppressors, and a blind and ignorant community. …

"… Every member of [our] society was driven from the county, and fields of corn were ravaged and destroyed; stacks of wheat burned, household goods plundered, and improvements and every kind of property destroyed" (*Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt,* ed. Parley P. Pratt Jr. [1938], 102–3).

More than 1,000 Saints were driven from Jackson County, and more than 200 of their homes were burned.

When the **Prophet Joseph Smith** heard that the Saints had been driven out of Zion, he was greatly dismayed. In a letter to Church leaders in Missouri on December 10, 1833, the Prophet wrote: "I have always expected that Zion would suffer some affliction, from what I could learn from the commandments which have been given. … I know that Zion, in the own due time of the Lord will be redeemed; but how many will be the days of her purification, tribulation and affliction, the Lord has kept hid from my eyes; and when I enquire concerning this subject, the voice of the Lord is, Be still, and know that I am God! All those who suffer for my name shall reign with me, and he that layeth down his life for my sake, shall find it again. Now, there are two things of which I am ignorant, and the Lord will not shew them [unto] me; … why God hath suffered so great calamity to come upon Zion; and what the great moving cause of this great affliction is: And again, by what means he will return her back to her inheritance" (in Manuscript History of the Church, vol. A-1, page 393, josephsmithpapers.org). The Prophet continued to inquire of God for answers, and on December 16–17, 1833, he received a revelation concerning Zion and the suffering of the Missouri Saints. …

### Doctrine and Covenants 101:16. "Be still and know that I am God"

The scriptures contain marvelous prophecies regarding the building up of Zion and the city of New Jerusalem as a place of refuge and safety (see Isaiah 35:10; Ether 13:5–8; D&C 42:9; 45:66–71). For this reason the early Saints were eager to gather to Jackson County, Missouri, to begin establishing Zion as the Lord had commanded. When the Saints were later driven from their lands and homes in Jackson County, they were devastated and uncertain about the future of Zion. Amid their grief and confusion, the Lord counseled them to "be still" and trust in Him (D&C 101:16). …

### Doctrine and Covenants 101:17–21. Zion and her stakes will be established

Despite the Saints' expulsion from Jackson County, Missouri, the Lord reaffirmed that "Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered" (D&C 101:17). Although the stakes of Zion have spread over the face of the earth, "the center place," Jackson County, continues to be designated by the Lord as the location for the city of New Jerusalem (see D&C 57:1–3; 101:17, 20–21).

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** (1915–1985) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: "There is no occasion for uncertainty or anxiety about the building up of Zion—meaning the New Jerusalem—in the last days. The Lord once offered his people the chance to build that Zion from which the law shall go forth to all the world. They failed. Why? Because they were unprepared and unworthy, as is yet the case with those of us who now comprise the kingdom. When we as a people are prepared and worthy, the Lord will again command us and the work will go forward—on schedule, before the Second Coming, and at the direction of the President of the Church. Until then, none of us need take any personal steps toward gathering to Missouri or preparing for a landed-inheritance there. Let us, rather, learn the great concepts involved and make ourselves worthy for any work the Lord may lay upon us in our day and time. Some things must yet precede the building up of Jackson County" (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 586).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual,* 2017, pp. 557–564)

## Chapter 41: Doctrine and Covenants 103; 105

### Introduction and Timeline

On February 24, 1834, Parley P. Pratt and Lyman Wight met with the Prophet Joseph Smith and the Kirtland high council to explain the plight of the Saints in Missouri and to seek counsel and help. On the same day, the Prophet received the revelation recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 103, in which the Lord promised that the Saints would be "[restored] to the land of Zion" if they did not "pollute their inheritances" (D&C 103:13–14) and directed Church leaders to gather resources and recruits to help the Saints in Missouri.

In obedience to the Lord's command, the Prophet Joseph Smith and just over 200 volunteers formed the Camp of Israel (later known as Zion's Camp) in order to go to the aid of the Saints who had been forced out of their homes in Jackson County, Missouri. On June 22, 1834, while camped four miles north of Fishing River, Missouri, Joseph Smith dictated the revelation recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 105, in which the Lord explained that the Saints must "wait for a little season for the redemption of Zion" (D&C 105:9). The Lord also gave instructions concerning what would need to occur in order for Zion to be redeemed, or reclaimed by the Saints, at a future time.

### Doctrine and Covenants 105:9–13. "Wait for a little season for the redemption of Zion"

The Lord explained that the Saints would have to "wait for a little season" before Zion would be redeemed (D&C 105:9, 13; see also D&C 100:13; 103:4). **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** (1915–1985) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught about what Church members need to do during that "little season" before Zion is redeemed:

"A little season—how long will it last? Will it be two hundred years? or three hundred? Though the day of the Second Coming is fixed, the day for the redemption of Zion depends upon us. After we as a people live the law of the celestial kingdom; after we gain the needed experience and learn our duties; after we become by faith and obedience as were our fellow saints in the days of Enoch; after we are worthy to be translated, if the purposes of the Lord should call for such a course in this day—then Zion will be redeemed, and not before.

"'This cannot be brought to pass until mine elders are endowed with power from on high. For behold, I have prepared a great endowment and blessing to be poured out upon them, inasmuch as they are faithful and continue in humility before me' [D&C 105:11–12]. As of this time the ordinances of the house of the Lord had not been revealed, and the endowment of power from on high received through them was needed in the heavenly work that lay ahead. 'Therefore it is expedient in me that mine elders should wait for a little season, for the redemption of Zion' [D&C 105:13]. And so we wait, wondering the while how long the 'little season' is destined to last. As to its length, we cannot say. This much only do we know: the 'little season' is the appointed period of preparation for the Latter-day Saints. In it we must attain the same spiritual stature enjoyed by those who built the original Zion. Then and then only will we build our latter-day City of Holiness" (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 616).

### Doctrine and Covenants 103:11–20. "The redemption of Zion"

In June of 1831 the Lord declared to the Saints that the land of Missouri would be consecrated as "the land of their inheritance" (see D&C 52:2–5, 42). Revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith indicated that the city of Independence in Jackson County, Missouri, was to be the center place of the city of Zion, or the New Jerusalem, where the Saints would gather from every nation, where a temple would be built, and where the Saints would dwell in safety and peace in their land of inheritance (see

D&C 45:66–69; 57:3; 84:2–4). Yet, by the end of 1833, Church members living in Jackson County had been forced to leave their homes and lands and "[had] been scattered" (see D&C 103:11).

Following the expulsion of the Saints from Jackson County, the Prophet received revelations indicating that Zion would eventually be redeemed, meaning that the modern-day land of promise would be reclaimed, or recovered, after the Saints had been sanctified (see D&C 101:16–20; 103:11–15; 105:1–10). In the revelation recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 103, the Lord likened the redemption of Zion to the children of Israel being led to the land of their inheritance. He said, "I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like Moses led the children of Israel" (D&C 103:16; see also Exodus 3:7–10). He told the Saints that they were "the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham" and needed to be "led out of bondage by power" (D&C 103:17). He assured them that not only would His angel go before them, like it was with the ancient Israelites, but His "presence" would be there as well (see D&C 103:19–20). The Lord had withheld His presence from the children of Israel led by Moses because they were "a stiffnecked people" (see Exodus 33:2–3).

The Lord explained in an earlier revelation that not only was the Prophet Joseph Smith like a latter-day Moses, but that each President of the Church would "be like unto Moses" as well (D&C 107:91; see also D&C 28:2).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual,* 2017, pp. 591, 595, 601)

**D&C 101:17–20. "Zion Shall Not Be Moved"**

Speaking of the expulsion from Jackson County, Elder James E. Talmage said: "The saints were not permitted to enter into immediate possession of the land, which was promised them as an everlasting inheritance. Even as years elapsed between the time of the Lord's promise to Israel of old that Canaan should be their inheritance, and the time of their entering into possession thereof—years devoted to the people's toilsome and sorrowful preparation for the fulfilment—so in these latter days the divine purpose is held in abeyance, while the people are being sanctified for the great gift and for the responsibilities associated with it. In the meantime the honest in heart are gathering to the valleys of the Rocky Mountains [and now to stakes all around the world]; and here, … Temples have been erected, and all nations are flowing unto this region. ***But Zion shall yet be established on the chosen site; she 'shall not be moved out of her place,' and the pure in heart shall return 'with songs of everlasting joy, to build up the waste places of Zion.'"***

(*Articles of Faith,* p. 353; see also Notes and Commentary on D&C 29:8.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition), 2001, p. 240)

There was a lot of manual references there but it is crucial that we understand that this is not "Micah's doctrine" this is "the Lord's doctrine," as well as it is important to have a basic understanding of what we are talking about here.

## 1. The Saints were told Jackson County Missouri was the place for the New Jerusalem.

The Lord also said that there would be no other place ever appointed to replace it—meaning this is it folks for the Lord cannot lie. If He could lie, the faith would be lost and all of heaven would cease to exist—or as the Lord himself said:

**Doctrine and Covenants 1**

**38** What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, ***my word shall not pass away,*** but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.

They were to build up the New Jerusalem and would receive permanent inheritances there.

## 2. The Saints were unable and/or unwilling to live Celestial Law.

As **President Brigham Young** latter taught:

Some may ask why we did not tarry at the Center Stake of Zion, when the Lord planted our feet there? We had eyes, but we did not see; we had ears, but we did not hear; we had hearts that were devoid of what the Lord required of his people; consequently we could not abide what the Lord revealed to us. We had to go from there to gain an experience. Can you understand this? I think there are some here who can. ***If we could have received the words of life and lived according to them,*** when we were first gathered to the Center Stake of Zion, we never would have been removed from that place. ***But we did not abide the law the Lord gave to us.*** We are here to gain an experience, and we cannot increase in that any faster than our capacities will admit. Our capacities are limited, though sometimes we could receive more than we do, but we will not. Preach the riches of eternal life to a congregation, and when the eyes and affections of that congregation are like the fool's eyes, to the ends of the earth, it is like throwing pearls before swine. If I can actually reach your understandings, you will know just what I know, and see just what I see in regard to what I may say.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 10, p. 290, May 15 1864)

And a huge part of this failure was explained by Joseph Smith as well as by the Lord.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

When I contemplate upon all things that have been manifested, I am aware that I ought not to murmur, and do not murmur, only in this, that those who are innocent are compelled to suffer for the iniquities of the guilty; and I cannot account for this, only on this wise, that the saying of the Savior has not been strictly observed: "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; or if thy right arm offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee." Now the fact is, if any of the members of our body is disordered, the rest of our body will be affected with it, and then all are brought into bondage together; and yet, notwithstanding all this, it is with difficulty that I can restrain my feelings when I know that you, my brethren, with whom I have had so many happy hours—sitting, as it were, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; and also, having the witness which I feel, and ever have felt, of the purity of your motives—are cast out, and are as strangers and pilgrims on the earth, exposed to hunger, cold, nakedness, peril, sword—I say when I contemplate this, it is with difficulty that I can keep from complaining and murmuring against this dispensation; but I am sensible that this is not right, and may God grant that notwithstanding your great afflictions and sufferings, there may not anything separate us from the love of Christ.

("The Righteous Suffer with the Guilty," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 34–35)

**Doctrine and Covenants 124**

**50** And the iniquity and transgression of my holy laws and commandments I will visit upon the heads of those who hindered my work, unto the third and fourth generation, so long as they repent not, and hate me, saith the Lord God.

**51** Therefore, for this cause have I accepted the offerings of those whom I commanded to build up a city and a house unto my name, in Jackson county, Missouri, and were hindered by their enemies, saith the Lord your God.

**52** And I will answer judgment, wrath, and indignation, wailing, and anguish, and gnashing of teeth upon their heads, unto the third and fourth generation, so long as they repent not, and hate me, saith the Lord your God.

**Doctrine and Covenants 63:24–31, 41. "They should assemble themselves together unto the land of Zion, not in haste"**

When the Prophet Joseph Smith returned to Kirtland, Ohio, and the Saints learned that the Lord had identified the area of Independence, Missouri, as the center place for the city of Zion, many were anxious to begin the process of moving there. However, the Lord made it clear that the Saints were not to gather to the land of Zion "in haste" (D&C 63:24; see also D&C 58:56). In fact, the Lord gave the Prophet the ability to "discern by the Spirit" who should relocate there (D&C 63:41).

Regarding these instructions from the Lord, **President Joseph Fielding Smith** explained why the Saints were to gather in an orderly fashion under the direction of Church leaders: "[The early members] were warned against creating antagonism among their neighbors, many of whom were extremely bitter towards the members of the Church. The Lord said the land could not be obtained by the shedding of blood. Those who had the privilege of assembling there should not go up to Zion in haste, but gradually. The reason for this advice is apparent, for haste would lead to confusion, unsatisfactory conditions and pestilence, and then, also, it creates consternation and fear in the hearts of their enemies and arouses greater opposition. Satan desired to destroy them and in his anger endeavored to stir them up to strife and contention as well as the older settlers in Missouri" (*Church History and Modern Revelation* [1953], 1:232).

To manage the number of Saints gathering to Zion, Church leaders required those in Ohio desiring to go to Missouri to obtain a Church-issued certificate before they could migrate and participate in the law of consecration in Missouri. However, many enthusiastic members disregarded the instruction and went to Missouri in large numbers. A Church historian appointed by the Prophet Joseph Smith later wrote, "The church immediately began to gather in Jackson County, and on this subject they became quite enthusiastic. They had been commanded not to go up in haste, nor by flight, but to have all things prepared before them. Money was to be sent up to the bishop, and as fast as lands were purchased, and preparations made, the bishop was to let it be known, that the church might be gathered in. But this regulation was not attended to, for the church got crazy to go up to Zion, as it was then called. The rich were afraid to send up their money to purchase lands, and the poor crowded up in numbers, without having any places provided, contrary to the advice of the bishop and others, until the old citizens began to be highly displeased" (John Corrill, *A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints* [1839], 18–19, josephsmithpapers.org; see also *The Joseph Smith Papers, Histories, Volume 2: Assigned Histories,* 1831–1847, ed. Karen Lynn Davidson and others [2012], 146).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual,* 2017, p. 338)

It is of, once again, crucial importance that Saints realize that it was the wicked (tares) within the church were what prevented Zion in the first instance and who were cursed to the third and fourth generation. We learn this crystal clear from the Savior when he breaks down the wheat and the tares—also pay attention to the tie ins to the Priesthood and think back (or scroll back) to D&C 113 above.

**Doctrine and Covenants 86**

**6** But the Lord saith unto them, ***pluck not up the tares while the blade is yet tender*** (for verily your faith is weak), lest you destroy the wheat also [meaning He couldn't purge out the tares in Joseph's time because it would have destroyed the whole church].

**7** Therefore, let the wheat and the tares grow together until the harvest is fully ripe [we learn when the harvest is fully ripe in D&C 101:11]; then ye shall ***first gather out the wheat from among the tares,*** and after the gathering of the wheat, behold and lo, the tares are bound in bundles, and the field remaineth to be burned.

**8** Therefore, thus saith the Lord unto you, with ***whom the priesthood hath continued through the lineage of your fathers***—

**9** ***For ye are lawful heirs, according to the flesh, and have been hid from the world with Christ in God***—

**10** ***Therefore your life and the priesthood have remained, and must needs remain through you and your lineage until the restoration of all things spoken by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began.***

**11** ***Therefore, blessed are ye if ye continue in my goodness, a light unto the Gentiles, and through this priesthood, a savior unto my people Israel. The Lord hath said it. Amen.***

## 3. The Saints would remain cast off until they would "awake and rise to the priesthood power that they had lost" (D&C 113) and redeem Zion.

The Lord taught us clearly, however, that:

**Doctrine and Covenants 105**

**2** Behold, I say unto you, were it not for the transgressions of my people, speaking concerning the church and not individuals, they might have been redeemed ***even now.***

So when discussing this subject we need to really honest with ourselves—we are not "waiting on the Lord," rather, "the Lord is waiting on us." Any generation from that point until today could have risen to the standard required and redeemed Zion. In fact, later in the same chapter the Lord further clarifies this point:

**16** Behold, I have commanded my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., to say unto the strength of my house, even my warriors, my young men, and middle-aged, to gather together for the redemption of my people, and throw down the towers of mine enemies, and scatter their watchmen;

**17** But the strength of mine house have not hearkened unto my words.

And thus the redemption was withheld…

**D&C 101:75. Zion Could Already Be Redeemed If the Saints Had Hearkened to the Lord's Voice**

In the revelation in section 101, given in December 1833, the Lord told His people that if those who called themselves Saints would only follow His counsels, they would have sufficient resources to redeem the land and to establish Zion, "no more to be thrown down" (D&C 101:75). In June 1834 the Lord indicated that Zion might already have been redeemed except for the transgressions of His people (see D&C 105:1–10). It is not the Lord who causes delays in bringing forth Zion. The rate at which His promises are fulfilled is determined by the willingness of His people to respond to His counsel.

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition), 2001, pp. 243–244)

**D&C 103:20. Zion Was Not to Be Redeemed in 1834**

President Joseph Fielding Smith explained the implications of the phrase in time: "It appears from this declaration that the redemption of Zion was not to come immediately, but was to be postponed to some future day. ***Moreover, that day would not come until the members of the Church were willing to keep their covenants and walk unitedly, for until the members of the Church learn to walk in full accord and in obedience with all of the commandments, this day cannot come. It may be necessary in order to bring this to pass for the Lord to use drastic measures and cleanse the Church from everything that offends. This he has promised to do when he is ready to redeem Zion.*** (See Matt. 13:41.)" (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 1:484.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition), 2001, p. 251)

**D&C 105:1–2. Why Was Zion's Redemption Postponed?**

**President Lorenzo Snow** taught that "the Saints in Jackson County and other localities, refused to comply with the order of consecration, consequently they were allowed to be driven from their inheritances; and should not return until they were better prepared to keep the law of God, by being more perfectly taught in reference to their duties, and learn through experience the necessity of obedience. And I think we are not justified in anticipating the privilege of returning to build up the center stake of Zion, until we shall have shown obedience to the law of consecration. One thing, however, is certain, we shall not be permitted to enter the land from whence we were expelled, till our hearts are prepared to honor this law, and we become sanctified through the practice of the truth." (In *Journal of Discourses,* 16:276; see also Notes and Commentary on D&C 101:1–8; 96:1.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition), 2001, p. 258)

**D&C 105:4–5. Upon What Principles Is Zion to Be Built?**

The Saints in Missouri were not successful in living a celestial law and so were not qualified to establish Zion. Failure to control their hearts cut them off from God's full power and kept them from prevailing over their enemies. This is the concept the Lord tried to teach them when He said, "This is Zion—THE PURE IN HEART" (D&C 97:21).

Only when our hearts are pure can we understand and live celestial law. Celestial law, according to **Elder Bruce R. McConkie,** "is the law of the gospel, the law of Christ, and it qualifies men for admission to the celestial kingdom because in and through it men are 'sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost,' thus becoming clean, pure, and spotless" (*Mormon Doctrine,* p. 117). Elder McConkie also said: "If a man obeys celestial law in this life, he obtains a celestial body and spirit" (p. 115). This enables the individual to live in unity with God and others.

**Elder Joseph F. Smith** explained: "Those who profess to be Latter-day Saints must become acquainted with the laws of the celestial kingdom, must abide by them, must comply with the requirements of heaven and hearken to the word of the Lord, in order that Zion may be built up acceptably, and that we may partake of the benefits and blessings of this labor. For it is a labor which devolves upon those who have been called out from the midst of the world in this dispensation.

We have been called, and so far as we will be faithful we are chosen to do this work. But notwithstanding we have been called, if we do not prove faithful we will be rejected. I do not speak this in reference to the whole Church, but in reference to individual members of the Church." (In Conference Report, Apr. 1880, p. 34; see also Smith, *Church History and Modern Revelation,* 2:3–4.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition), 2001, p. 258)

**D&C 105:9–12. How Long Will the Lord Wait to Redeem Zion?**

The Lord works through His children and honors their agency, so their wickedness or righteousness can impede or accelerate His work. In section 105 the Lord spoke of the importance of preparation to the establishment of Zion:

1. He wanted His leaders to be prepared (see vv. 9–10).
2. He wanted the Saints to be taught more perfectly what He requires of them (see v. 10).
3. He wanted the Saints to gain experience (see v. 10). No one can know the things of God without doing them (see John 7:17).
4. He wanted the Saints to know their duty more perfectly (see D&C 105:10).
5. He wanted the Saints to be endowed with power from on high (see v. 11).
6. He wanted the Saints to be faithful, enduring in humility to the end (see v. 12).

President J. Reuben Clark Jr. taught that the principles of the welfare system "are not too far away" from the united order, and that the Saints need to add to them "brotherly love" and "provide the things which those who are in need, must have" (*Church News,* 8 Aug. 1951, p. 15).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition), 2001, p. 258–259)

Even **Joseph Smith** didn't know the answer for "how long."

"Those who are your friends are my friends, and I promise you ***when I come again,*** I will lead you forth, so that where I am you shall be with me. Boys—he always called us 'his boys'—don't be sad, don't be cast down, I will come back again." After a little hesitation he added, ***"as soon as I can."*** That expression, ***"as soon as I can,"*** sank deep into my heart and confirmed my fears. I never expected to see him again alive. The sad expression upon his face as he looked upon us, "his boys," for the last time I shall never forget. I felt in my inmost soul that he was going to be butchered, and we should see him no more alive.

(Wandle Mace, *Autobiography of Wandle Mace,* typescript, BYU Special Collections, pp. 145–146; Autobiography of Wandle Mace, typescript, BYU Special Collections, pp. 131–132, Joseph Smith, to the Nauvoo Legion the final time)

## II. When will this happen, points of reference, etc.?

**Ether 4**

**6** For the Lord said unto me: They shall not go forth unto the Gentiles until the day that they shall repent of their iniquity, and become clean before the Lord.

**7** And in that day that they shall exercise faith in me, saith the Lord, even as the brother of Jared did, that they may become sanctified in me, then will I manifest unto them the things which the brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my revelations, saith Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are. ...

**15** Behold, when ye shall rend that veil of unbelief which doth cause you to remain in your awful state of wickedness, and hardness of heart, and blindness of mind, then shall the great and marvelous things which have been hid up from the foundation of the world from you—yea, when ye shall call upon the Father in my name, with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, then shall ye know that the Father hath remembered the covenant which he made unto your fathers, O house of Israel.

**16** And then shall my revelations which I have caused to be written by my servant John be unfolded in the eyes of all the people. Remember, when ye see these things, ye shall know that the time is at hand that they shall be made manifest in very deed.

As to the when the Lord gave us some of our best information in the Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive trees found in D&C 101, which I have a paper on so I won't be breaking this down in as much detail in this paper, however, one has to understand something—they ***have to*** understand it or they will not understand the parable in the slightest... Period!

And that is what the **Prophet Joseph Smith** taught about this parable on July 19, 1840, said he:

The olive trees are 12 stakes which ***are yet to be built, not the Temple in Jackson as some suppose.*** For while the 12 stakes are being built we will be at peace but the Nations of the Earth will be at war.

(*The Joseph Smith Papers,* "Discourse, circa 19 July 1840, as Reported by Martha Jane Knowlton Coray–B")

From this we learn that the entirety of the parable dealt with the future, post 1840, and NONE of the parable dealt with the past, pre 1840… With this understanding we can see that the Lord was laying out the future timeline of the church and eventual redemption of Zion… If the Saints had built Zion, the New Jerusalem, the law would have gone forth from it and it would have eventually filled the earth—they failed—and so the Lord in His mercy brought the Saints "to the mountains," there to gain in experience and prepare themselves so as to redeem Zion and build the tower…

**Brigham Young**

> I said to Brother Joseph, the spring before he was killed, 'You are laying out work for twenty years.' [Joseph] replied, 'You have as yet scarcely begun to work; but I will set you enough to last you during your lives, for I am going to rest.' All I can do or ask now is to do the work, so that it will be right and acceptable to [Joseph Smith] when he comes here again.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 5, Discourse 55, p. 331, October 7, 1857)

**Brigham Young**

> How long, Latter-day Saints, before you will believe the Gospel as it is? The Lord has declared it to be his will that his people enter into covenant, even as Enoch and his people did, which of necessity must be before we shall have the privilege of building the Center Stake of Zion, for the power and glory of God will be there, and none but the pure in heart will be able to live and enjoy it.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 18, Discourse 32, p. 263, Oct 8, 1876)

**Brigham Young**

> I want to say a few words still further to the people with regard to their faith in temporal things. If the people called Latter-day Saints do not become one in temporal things as they are in spiritual things, they will not redeem and build up the Zion of God upon the earth.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 13, Discourse 1, p. 3, April 7, 1869)

**Lorenzo Snow**

> Zion cannot be built up except on the principles of union required by the celestial law.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 19, Discourse 48, p. 350, April 21, 1878)

**Lorenzo Snow**

> What a glorious thing! You will know no prison walls, your friends turning away from you, your being dispossessed of your property, being driven from your home, being cast into prison, being defamed. These things do not hurt you one particle. They do not destroy your prospects, which are still glorious before you. And then we should understand that the Lord has provided, when the days of trouble come upon the nations, a place for you and me, and we will be preserved as Noah was preserved, not in an ark, but we will be preserved by going into these principles of union by which we can accomplish the work of the Lord and surround ourselves with those things that will preserve us from the difficulties that are now coming upon the world, the judgments of the Lord.
>
> (In Conference Report, October 1900, p. 4)

**Lorenzo Snow**

> The principles of Plural Marriage were revealed for the benefit and exaltation of the children of men, but how much unhappiness has arisen through failure, on the part of some who have contracted this order of marriage, to conform to the laws that govern it! But does it arise through any defect in the order of the marriage system? O no; but from ignorance and the folly and wickedness of those individuals who enter into it, who abuse, rather than righteously obey, it. So in regard to the principles of the United Order. Its principles too are sacred, and I assure you we will never go back to Jackson County, Missouri, there to build up the new Jerusalem of the latter days, until there is a perfect willingness on our part to conform to its rules and principles. Many years have transpired since we received the revelation of the United Order, and in one sense that long period of time bespeaks negligence on our part in not more fully obeying it. The very principles of that order, in my estimation, were given for our temporal and spiritual salvation. In order to derive the benefit that God designed should flow from them, they must be established and systematized on the principle of righteousness, each person learning to love his neighbor as himself. For us to undertake to deal with them on any other principle would virtually open the way to bitter disappointment.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 18, Discourse 48, p. 375, April 5, 1877)

**Lorenzo Snow**

> Hence we learn that the Saints in Jackson County and other localities, refused to comply with the order of consecration, consequently they were allowed to be driven from their inheritances; and should not return until they were better prepared to keep the law of God, by being more perfectly taught in reference to their duties, and learn through experience the necessity of obedience. And I think we are not justified in anticipating the privilege of returning to build up the Center Stake of Zion, until we shall have shown obedience to the law of consecration. One thing, however, is certain, we shall not be permitted to enter the land from whence we were expelled, till our hearts are prepared to honor this law, and we become sanctified through the practice of the truth.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 16, Discourse 38, p. 276, October 7, 1873)

**Wilford Woodruff**

> Let us, therefore, try and do our duty. Let us attend to the ordinances of the house of God, and unite ourselves according to his law, for Jesus will never receive the Zion of God unless its people are united according to celestial law, for all who go into the presence of God have to go there by this law. Enoch had to practice this law, and we shall have to do the same if we are ever accepted of God as he was. It has been promised that the New Jerusalem [could] be built up in our day and generation, and ***it will have to be done by the United Order of Zion and according to celestial law.*** And not only so, but we have to keep that law ourselves if we ever inherit that kingdom, for no man will receive a celestial glory unless he abides a celestial law; no man will receive a terrestrial glory unless he abides a terrestrial law, and no man will receive a telestial glory unless he abides a telestial law. There is a great difference between the light of the sun at noonday and the glimmer of the stars at night, but that difference is no greater than the difference of the glory in the several portions of the kingdom of God.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 17, Discourse 36, p. 250, Oct. 9, 1874)

**2012 Sunday School Presidency**

> The Doctrine and Covenants is the handbook for building Zion, and the revelations recorded therein are as timely and applicable in the current day as they were when Jesus Christ gave them to the Prophet Joseph Smith and others. This is the story of the Doctrine and Covenants: The Lord expected great things and still does expect great things," said Brother Richardson. "The whole Doctrine and Covenants in my opinion is really the handbook for building Zion… that is a great expectation, but I think the Lord is saying 'You can do this, and I actually expect you to do this, or I wouldn't ask it of you.'"
>
> (*Church News,* "Doctrine and Covenants: 'The Handbook for Building Zion,'" Speaking about 2012 curriculum of Doctrine and Covenants)

**Brigham Young**

> This is the land of Zion; but we are not yet prepared to go and establish the Center Stake of Zion. The Lord tried this in the first place. He called the people together to the place where the New Jerusalem and the great temple will be built, and where He will prepare for the City of Enoch. And He gave revelation after revelation; but the people could not abide them, and the Church was scattered and peeled, and the people hunted from place to place till, finally, they were driven into the mountains, and here we are. Now, it is for you and me to prepare to return back again; not to our fatherland, in many cases, but to return east, and by-and-by to build up the Center Stake of Zion. We are not prepared to do this now, but we are here to learn until we are of one heart and of one mind in the things of this life. Do all the Latter-day Saints arrive at this? No; they have not, our former experience has proved this. Of the great many who have been baptized into this Church, but few have been able to abide the word of the Lord; they have fallen out on the right and on the left, and have foundered by the way, and a few have gathered together. Will these be prepared to enter the celestial kingdom? Some of them will be, and will become kings and priests; but not all of these, only a portion of them. They do not know what to do with the revelations, commandments, and blessings of God. Talking, for instance, about everyday things, how many do we see here that know what to do with money and property when they get it? Are their eyes single to the building up of the kingdom of God? No; they are single to the building up of themselves. With all the knowledge that Elders have obtained who have traveled in the Church five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, or thirty years, there are few who understand the principles of the kingdom and whose eyes are single to the building of it up in all respects; but their eyes are like the fool's eye—looking to the ends of the earth. They want this and that, and they do not know what to do; they lack wisdom. By-and-by, perhaps, their wealth will depart from them, and when left poor and penniless, they will humble themselves before the Lord that they may be saved.
>
> This is the situation of the Latter-day Saints, yet they are increasing. It is astonishing to look back and see the ignorance that was manifested by the people in their first gathering together; their experience then was far less than their experience and doings now. Still we are far short of being what we should and must be.
>
> When the people assemble together they should be instructed with regard to their temporal lives. It is good to assemble together and pray, and preach, and exhort, so that we may obtain the power of God to that degree that we can heal the sick, cast out devils, speak with tongues, prophecy and enjoy all the blessings and gifts of the holy gospel; but that does not raise our bread, nor perfect the Saints in wisdom. I referred here, last Sunday, to men out of the Church who possess great gifts and who are not in the Church. Men who know nothing of the Priesthood receive revelation and prophecy, and yet these gifts belong to the Church, and those who are faithful in the kingdom of God inherit them and are entitled to them; and all ought to live so as to enjoy the spirit of these gifts and callings continually.
>
> Do we know and understand that it is our business to build up Zion? To have seen the way this people have conducted themselves in years past, one would not have had the least idea that such was our business; but it made no difference whom we built cities for; many would build for Jew or Gentile, Greek, Mahommedan, or Pagan, every class of men on the earth, as readily, apparently, as they would build up Zion. Yet the word of the Lord to us is to build up Zion and her cities and stakes. Lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes, O ye House of Israel; add to her beauty and add to her strength! Why, to have seen the conduct of the people you might have supposed they knew no more about Zion than about a city of the Chinese, or a city in France, Italy, Germany, or Asia; just as soon build up a city in Asia or Africa as anywhere else, "no matter whom we build for if we only get the dollar, only get our pay for our work." Yet the commandment of God to us is to build up Zion and her cities. I told you here last Sunday what Joseph said in this respect—what we should build and what we should not build up. This book [the book of Doctrine and Covenants] is full of it.
>
> We say we believe Joseph was a prophet, that he had the priesthood and was called of God to gather the people together and establish Zion. If we believe this, why not let our lives prove that we believe the doctrine that we profess? Can you see any of the Christians in the world who do not believe the doctrine they profess? It is a very dark picture to look upon—a sad affair that we disbelieve our own doctrines. Let us remember them and live accordingly.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 11, Discourse 47, p. 324, February 10, 1867)

Eventually the church even went global, with missionaries being sent everywhere to get the blood of Israel everywhere ready and prepared for the eventual redemption of Zion and building of the New Jerusalem… Or as the Lord put it in the Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees:

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

> **43** And now, I will show unto you a parable, that you may know my will concerning the redemption of Zion.
>
> **44** A certain nobleman had a spot of land, very choice; and he said unto his servants: Go ye unto my vineyard, even upon this very choice piece of land, and plant twelve olive trees;
>
> **45** And set watchmen round about them, and build a tower, that one may overlook the land round about, to be a watchman upon the tower, that mine olive trees may not be broken down when the enemy shall come to spoil and take upon themselves the fruit of my vineyard.
>
> **46** Now, the servants of the nobleman went and did as their lord commanded them, and planted the olive trees, and built a hedge round about, and set watchmen, and began to build a tower.

That is what we just read above, from prophets Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff, Lorenzo Snow, etc. but the parable teaches us that something went wrong along the way… It continues:

> **47** And while they were yet laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves: And what need hath my lord of this tower?
>
> **48** And consulted for ***a long time,*** saying among themselves: What need hath my lord of this tower, seeing this is a time of peace?
>
> **49** Might not this money be given to the exchangers? For there is no need of these things.
>
> **50** And while they were at variance one with another they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord.

The next verse in Isaiah 52 (I hope you haven't forgotten that's what we are breaking down) and The Book of Mormon also teach us what went wrong:

**Isaiah 52**

> **3** For thus saith the LORD, Ye have ***sold*** yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed ***without money.***

**Mormon 8**

> **34** Behold, the Lord hath shown unto me great and marvelous things concerning that which must shortly come, at that day when these things shall come forth among you.
>
> **35** Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing.
>
> **36** And I know that ye do walk in the pride of your hearts; ***and there are none save a few only*** who do not lift themselves up in the pride of their hearts, unto the wearing of very fine apparel, unto envying, and strifes, and malice, and persecutions, and all manner of iniquities; and

your churches, yea, even every one, have become polluted because of the pride of your hearts.

**37** For behold, ye do love money, and your substance, and your fine apparel, and the adorning of your churches, more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted.

**38** O ye pollutions, ye hypocrites, ye teachers, who sell yourselves for that which will canker, why have ye polluted ***the holy church of God?*** Why are ye ashamed to take upon you the name of Christ? Why do ye not think that greater is the value of an endless happiness than that misery which never dies—because of the praise of the world?

**39** Why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not?

**40** Yea, why do ye build up your secret abominations to get gain, and cause that widows should mourn before the Lord, and also orphans to mourn before the Lord, ***and also the blood of their fathers and their husbands to cry unto the Lord from the ground, for vengeance upon your heads?***

**41** Behold, the sword of vengeance hangeth over you; and the time soon cometh that he avengeth the blood of the saints upon you, for he will not suffer their cries any longer.

**2 Nephi 28**

**4** And they shall contend one with another; and their priests shall contend one with another, and they shall teach with their learning, and deny the Holy Ghost, which giveth utterance.

**5** And they deny the power of God, the Holy One of Israel; and they say unto the people: Hearken unto us, and hear ye our precept; for behold there is no God today, for the Lord and the Redeemer hath done his work, and he hath given his power unto men;

**6** Behold, hearken ye unto my precept; if they shall say there is a miracle wrought by the hand of the Lord, believe it not; for this day he is not a God of miracles; he hath done his work.

**7** Yea, and there shall be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die; and it shall be well with us.

**8** And there shall also be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry; nevertheless, fear God—he will justify in committing a little sin; yea, lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this; and do all these things, for tomorrow we die; and if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God.

**9** Yea, and there shall be many which shall teach after this manner, false and vain and foolish doctrines, and shall be puffed up in their hearts, and shall seek deep to hide their counsels from the Lord; and their works shall be in the dark.

**10** ***And the blood of the saints shall cry from the ground against them.***

**11** Yea, they have all gone out of the way; they have become corrupted.

**12** Because of pride, and because of false teachers, and false doctrine, their churches have become corrupted, and their churches are lifted up; because of pride they are puffed up.

**13** They rob the poor because of their fine sanctuaries; they rob the poor because of their fine clothing; and they persecute the meek and the poor in heart, because in their pride they are puffed up.

**14** They wear stiff necks and high heads; yea, and because of pride, and wickedness, and abominations, and whoredoms, ***they have all gone astray save it be a few, who are the humble followers of Christ; nevertheless, they are led, that in many instances they do err because they are taught by the precepts of men.***

**15** O the wise, and the learned, and the rich, that are puffed up in the pride of their hearts, and all those who preach false doctrines, and all those who commit whoredoms, and pervert the right way of the Lord, wo, wo, wo be unto them, saith the Lord God Almighty, for they shall be thrust down to hell!

**16** Wo unto them that turn aside the just for a thing of naught and revile against that which is good, and say that it is of no worth! For the day shall come that the Lord God will speedily visit the inhabitants of the earth; and in that day that they are fully ripe in iniquity they shall perish.

**2 Nephi 26**

**29** He commandeth that there shall be ***no priestcrafts;*** for, behold, priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may ***get gain*** and praise of the world; but ***they seek not the welfare of Zion.***

**30** Behold, the Lord hath forbidden this thing; wherefore, the Lord God hath given a commandment that all men should have charity, which charity is love. And except they should have charity they were nothing. Wherefore, if they should have charity they would not suffer the laborer in Zion to perish.

**31** ***But the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish.***

**Helaman 13**

**25** And now when ye talk, ye say: ***If our days had been in the days of our fathers of old, we would not have slain the prophets; we would not have stoned them, and cast them out.***

**26** ***Behold ye are worse than they;*** for as the Lord liveth, if a prophet come among you and declareth unto you the word of the Lord, which testifieth of your sins and iniquities, ye are angry with him, and cast him out and seek all manner of ways to destroy him; yea, you will say that he is a false prophet, and that he is a sinner, and of the devil, because he testifieth that your deeds are evil.

**27** But behold, if a man shall come among you and shall say: Do this, and there is no iniquity; do that and ye shall not suffer; yea, he will say: Walk after ***the pride of your own hearts*** [i.e. "spirit-o-meters"]; yea, walk after the pride of your eyes, and ***do whatsoever your heart desireth***—and if a man shall come among you and say this, ye will receive him, and say that he is a prophet. [or a great teacher, YouTuber, writer, etc.]

**28** Yea, ye will lift him up, and ye will give unto him of your substance; ye will give unto him of your gold, and of your silver, and ye will clothe him with costly apparel; and because he speaketh flattering words unto you, and he saith that all is well, then ye will not find fault with him. [Clearly identifying "getting gain" as a key to priestcraft]

**29** O ye wicked and ye perverse generation; ye hardened and ye stiffnecked people, how long will ye suppose that the Lord will suffer you? Yea, how long will ye suffer yourselves to be led by foolish and blind guides? Yea, how long will ye choose darkness rather than light?

**30** Yea, behold, the anger of the Lord is ***already*** kindled against you; behold, he hath ***cursed the land*** because of your iniquity.

So when did this happen?

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

**28** And when the times of the Gentiles is come in, a light shall break forth among them that sit in darkness, and it shall be the fulness of my gospel;

**29** But they receive it not; for they perceive not the light, and they turn their hearts from me ***because of the precepts of men.***

**30** And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

**3 Nephi 20**

**28** ... Nevertheless, when they shall have received the fulness of my gospel, then if they shall harden their hearts against me I will return their iniquities upon their own heads, saith the Father.

So what happened and when? The servants planted the olive trees and began to prepare to redeem Zion and build the New Jerusalem, but then a generation arose that rejected the fullness of the Gospel of Christ, and in that generation's life the times of the Gentiles was fulfilled (Where Are We, The Macro Last-days Timeline, etc.). Priestcrafts then began infiltrating the church and its members which caused the people to altogether reject the prophets and their counsel, substituting the fear of God with the fear of man and the precepts of God for that of the precepts of man. The previous Saint's blood then cries from the ground (5th Seal Event—meaning this takes place after the 5th Seal is opened in heaven) and the Lord's curse/scourge/etc. are then unleashed because the "cup of iniquity is full"… Did the Lord and His prophets give any other warning of this reality other than the Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees?

**Isaiah 28**

**1** Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine!

**2** Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand.

**3** The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under feet:

**4** And the glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, shall be a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer; which when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.

**5** In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people,

**6** And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.

**7** But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.

**8** For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean.

**(15-11) Isaiah 28:1–8. "Woe to the Crown of Pride, to the Drunkards of Ephraim"**

Here Isaiah continues the theme that Israel (both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms) must face judgments ***before*** Jacob's final restoration. Isaiah, chapter 28, speaks of the rebellion of the ten tribes inhabiting northern Israel, of which Ephraim was the acknowledged leader. "The Lord hath a mighty and strong" nation, Assyria, waiting like "a flood of mighty waters" to humble Israel by casting her "down to the earth" (v. 2). Then, like a flower that fades in the hot sun (see v. 4), or a drunken man who staggers under wine (see v. 7), Israel will be removed from her promised land.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), pp. 162–163)

So Ephraim became "drunk but not with strong drink," we rejected the prophets instead falling in love with our priestcraft, yea even to lifting them up and giving to them of our substance… What should we have been doing?

**Doctrine and Covenants 84**

**54** And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—

**55** Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation.

**56** And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all.

**57** And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, ***but to do according to that which I have written***

**President Benson** gives us a solid idea of the points of reference:

This condemnation has not been lifted, nor will it be until we repent" (remarks by President Ezra Taft Benson, General Authority Temple Meeting, Thursday, 5 March 1987). He also repeated his declaration of a year earlier that, in our day, the Lord has inspired his servant to reemphasize the Book of Mormon to get the Church out from under condemnation (see *Ensign,* May 1986, p. 78), and later in 1989 he made it even clearer: "My dear brethren and sisters, we must prepare to redeem Zion. It was essentially the sin of pride that kept us from establishing Zion in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith. It was the same sin of pride that brought consecration to an end among the Nephites. (See 4 Ne. 1:24–25.) Pride is the great stumbling block to Zion. I repeat: Pride is the great stumbling block to Zion" ("Beware of Pride," 1989).

**Ezra Taft Benson**

Now Satan is anxious to neutralize the inspired counsel of the Prophet and hence keep the priesthood off-balance, ineffective and inert in the fight for freedom. He does this through diverse means including the use of perverse reasoning….Sometimes from behind the pulpit, in our classrooms, in our Council meetings and in our church publications we hear, read or witness things that do not square with the truth… Now do not let this serve as an excuse for your own wrong-doing. The Lord is letting the wheat and the tares mature before he fully purges the Church. He is also testing you to see if you will be misled. The devil is trying to deceive the very elect. As members of the Church we have some close quarters to pass through if we are to save our souls. As the Church gets larger some men have increasing responsibility and more and more duties must be delegated. We all have stewardships for which we must account to the Lord. Unfortunately some men who do not honor their stewardships may have an adverse affect on many people. Often the greater the man's responsibility the more good or evil he can accomplish. The Lord usually gives a man a long enough rope and sufficient time to determine whether that man wants to pull himself into the presence of God or drop off somewhere below. There are some regrettable things being said and done by some people in the Church today. As President Clark so well warned, 'The ravening wolves are amongst us, from our own membership and they, more than any others, are clothed in sheep's clothing because they wear the habiliments of the priesthood…. We should be careful of them.'"

("Our Immediate Responsibility," BYU Devotional, October 25, 1966)

**Ezra Taft Benson**

Sometimes we hear someone refer to a division in the Church. In reality, the Church is not divided. It simply means that there are some who, for the time being at least, are members of the Church but not in harmony with it. These people have a temporary membership and influence in the Church; but unless they repent, they will be missing when the final membership records are recorded.

It is well that our people understand this principle, so they will not be misled by those apostates within the Church who have not yet repented or been cut off. But there is a cleansing coming. The Lord says that his vengeance shall be poured out "upon the inhabitants of the earth . . . And upon my house shall it begin, and from my house shall it go forth, saith the Lord; First among those among you, saith the Lord, who have professed to know my name and have not known me" D&C 112:24–26 I look forward to that cleansing; its need within the Church is becoming increasingly apparent.

("To the humble followers of Christ," General Conference, April 1969)

**Isaiah 28**

> **9** Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.
>
> **10** For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:
>
> **11** For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.
>
> **12** To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.
>
> **13** But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.
>
> **14** Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem.

So we did not listen, we did not sanctify ourselves and redeem Zion as President Benson told us, we did not wean ourselves and learn precept upon precept, line upon line—no, we became the drunkards of Ephraim!

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

> **51** And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive trees.
>
> **52** Now, behold, the nobleman, the lord of the vineyard, called upon his servants, and said unto them, Why! what is the cause of this great evil?
>
> **53** Ought ye not to have done even as I commanded you, and—after ye had planted the vineyard, and built the hedge round about, and set watchmen upon the walls thereof—built the tower also, and set a watchman upon the tower, and watched for my vineyard, and not have fallen asleep, lest the enemy should come upon you?
>
> **54** And behold, the watchman upon the tower would have seen the enemy while he was yet afar off; and then ye could have made ready and kept the enemy from breaking down the hedge thereof, and saved my vineyard from the hands of the destroyer.

**Doctrine and Covenants 112**

> **23** Verily, verily, I say unto you, darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the people, and all flesh has become corrupt before my face.
>
> **24** Behold, vengeance cometh speedily upon the inhabitants of the earth, a day of wrath, a day of burning, a day of desolation, of weeping, of mourning, and of lamentation; and as a whirlwind it shall come upon all the face of the earth, saith the Lord.
>
> **25** And upon my house shall it begin, and from my house shall it go forth, saith the Lord;
>
> **26** First among those among you, saith the Lord, who have professed to know my name and have not known me, and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house, saith the Lord.

**Isaiah 52** (continued)

> **4** For thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.
>
> **5** Now therefore, what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the LORD; and my name continually every day is blasphemed.
>
> **6** Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak: behold, it is I.

The damage to the olive trees. Because we failed to build the tower, because of those actions, we have allowed the damage to be done to the olive trees. The Lord warned us if/when such a time arrived the Saints, or "His House," would be the first to feel His fury and chastening hand.

**Wilford Woodruff** recounts of this first coming of the Savior just discussed:

> On Sunday (April 26, 1834) night the Prophet called us all who held the Priesthood to gather into the little log school house they had there. It was a small house, perhaps 14 feet square. But it held the whole of the Priesthood of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who were then in the town of Kirtland, and who had gathered together to go off in ***Zion's Camp.*** That was the first time I ever saw Oliver Cowdery, or heard him speak; the first time I ever saw Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, and the two Pratts, and Orson Hyde and many others. There were no Apostles in the Church then except Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. When we got together the Prophet called upon the Elders of Israel with him to bear testimony of this work. Those that I have named spoke, and a good many that I have not named, bore their testimonies.
>
> When they got through the Prophet said, "Brethren I have been very much edified and instructed in your testimonies here tonight, but I want to say to you before the Lord, that you know no more concerning the destinies of this Church and kingdom than a babe upon its mother's lap. You don't comprehend it." I was rather surprised. He said "It is only a little handful of Priesthood you see here tonight, but this Church will fill North and South America—it will fill the world." Among other things he said, "it will fill the Rocky Mountains. There will be tens of thousands of Latter-days Saints who will be gathered in the Rocky Mountains, and there they will open the door for the establishing of the Gospel among the Lamanites, who will receive the Gospel and their endowments and the blessings of God. This people will go into the Rocky Mountains; they will there build temples to the Most High. They will raise up ***a posterity there,*** and the Latter-day Saints who dwell in these mountains will stand in the flesh ***until the coming of the Son of Man. The Son of Man will come to them while in the Rocky Mountains.***
>
> (*Conference Report,* 6 April 1898, 57)

**Isaiah 1**

> **2** Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.
>
> **3** The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.
>
> **4** Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto danger, they are gone away ***backward.***
>
> **5** Why should ye be stricken any more? ***ye will revolt more and more:*** the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.
>
> **6** From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.
>
> **7** Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.
>
> **8** And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city.
>
> **9** ***Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom,*** and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.
>
> **10** Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.
>
> **11** To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.

**12** When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

**13** Bring no more ***vain oblations;*** incense is an abomination unto me; ***the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.***

**14** ***Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.***

**15** And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

**Isaiah 10**

**1** Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed;

**2** To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!

**3** And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?

**4** Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

**5** O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.

**6** I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

**Isaiah 28**

**15** Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:

**16** Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

**17** Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the ***hail*** shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the ***waters*** shall overflow the hiding place.

**18** And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when ***the overflowing scourge*** shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it.

**19** From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report.

**20** For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.

The Lord is not happy with His people. Oxen and donkeys know their masters and listen, yet Israel refuses to build the tower, and because of this refusal they stumble backwards. But then the Lord realized that He can't let this continue, for "ye shall revolt more and more," meaning He know knows if he does nothing, the people will not turn around, they will just sin in open rebellion more and more. He then says that chapel worship AND temple worship have become vain unto them, damning… and when problems start, the Lord will be slow to hear their prayers, and why? "There is blood on your hands"… "But wherein do we have blood on our hands?!" I hear one ask,

**Alma 60**

**10** And now, my beloved brethren—for ye ought to be beloved; yea, and ye ought to have stirred yourselves more diligently for the welfare and the freedom of this people; but behold, ye have neglected them insomuch that the blood of thousands shall come upon your heads for vengeance; yea, for known unto God were all their cries, and all their sufferings—

**11** Behold, could ye suppose that ye could sit upon your thrones, and because of the exceeding goodness of God ye could do nothing and he would deliver you? Behold, if ye have supposed this ye have supposed in vain.

**12** Do ye suppose that, because so many of your brethren have been killed it is because of their wickedness? I say unto you, if ye have supposed this ye have supposed in vain; for I say unto you, there are many who have fallen by the sword; and behold it is to your condemnation;

**13** For the Lord suffereth the righteous to be slain that his justice and judgment may come upon the wicked; therefore ye need not suppose that the righteous are lost because they are slain; but behold, they do enter into the rest of the Lord their God.

**14** And now behold, I say unto you, I fear exceedingly that the judgments of God will come upon this people, because of their exceeding slothfulness, yea … and their exceedingly great neglect towards their brethren, yea, towards those who have been slain.

Because of this, because we failed to build the tower, the Lord will send the Assyrian(s) who is a representation of the Lord's indignation and who is being used by the Lord. There is also a note that if there wasn't a small remnant of truly righteous people among us, that at this point in time we would already have become as Sodom (this "remnant" is who will spearhead the redemption).

**(15-12) Isaiah 28:14–15. In What Way Had Judah "Made a Covenant with Death, and with Hell"?**

"The prophet confronts the rulers of Jerusalem with the assertion that their policy and behavior are bringing inevitable ruin. This time the fault is that ***they have deliberately entered into a covenant to serve, in return for protection, a god or gods other than their own.*** Death, *maweth,* is here the god of the underworld, Sheol or hell. Perhaps the Canaanite god of the underworld, Mot, is intended, or the reference may be to the Egyptian Osiris. It was customary for the prophets to speak of the alien deities as lies and falsehood (compare Amos 2:4; Jer. 10:14). In contrast ***to this act of panic by the rulers,*** Isaiah declares that faith in God is the only secure foundation of Zion's security, and that his justice and righteousness alone ***can erect a building that will stand.*** Those who in fright have sought to secure themselves by worshiping other gods as well, will experience in sheer terror the effects of Yahweh's decree of destruction." (*The Interpreter's Bible,* 5:317.)

Of course, the phrase may have a spiritual meaning as well. Israel made a covenant with death because that is what "the wages of sin" are—death (Romans 6:23).

***For other references to the overflowing scourge in modern times, see Doctrine and Covenants 29:17–19; 45:31; 84:96–97; 97:22–26; 105:15.***

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 163)

This connects these scriptures with Doctrine and Covenants 45, but also further clarifies the reasons for the desolating sickness. It also ties this into the parable of the nobleman and the olive trees, as the "servants are acting under panic," and the reminder of the Lord that the people should have built the buildings (tower) that would stand. People in panic will begin to start worshiping other gods (such as Gaia worship, LGBTQ+ worship, etc.). This ties us into why the Lord in 3 Nephi 25 tells the servant to remember the 10 commandments when judging these people (i.e. "have no other gods").

**Doctrine and Covenants 103**

**5** But verily I say unto you, that I have decreed a decree which my people shall realize, inasmuch as they hearken from this very hour unto the counsel which I, the Lord their God, shall give unto them.

**6** Behold they shall, for I have decreed it, begin to prevail against mine enemies from this very hour.

**7** And by hearkening to observe all the words which I, the Lord their God, shall speak unto them, they shall never cease to prevail until the kingdoms of the world are subdued under my feet, and the earth is given unto the saints, to possess it forever and ever.

**8** But inasmuch as they keep not my commandments, and hearken not to observe all my words, the kingdoms of the world shall prevail against them.

**9** ***For they were set to be a light unto the world,*** and to be the saviors of men;

**10** And inasmuch as they are not the saviors of men, they are as salt that has lost its savor, and ***is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.***

**11** But verily I say unto you, ***I have decreed that your brethren which have been scattered shall return to the lands of their inheritances, and shall build up the waste places of Zion.***

**12** ***For after much tribulation, as I have said unto you in a former commandment, cometh the blessing.***

**13** Behold, this is the blessing which I have promised after your tribulations, and the tribulations of your brethren—your redemption, and the redemption of your brethren, even their restoration to the land of Zion, to be established, no more to be thrown down.

**14** Nevertheless, if they pollute their inheritances they shall be thrown down; for I will not spare them if they pollute their inheritances.

The Lord says once again, that if the people were obedient, even then, they would redeem Zion and build New Jerusalem and they would eventually subdue all nations under their feet; but if they would not be obedient the kingdoms of the world would rule over THEM. The Lord then sets the groundwork for understanding "the Light breaking forth," it was to be THEM, those he was talking to! They were to carry Christ's Light into the world! Once again, the "precepts of men" screw things up! The Lord then brings up "Joseph's Boys" again… "Those that have been scattered shall redeem Zion and build New Jerusalem after the tribulation… those that don't wake up and seize their birthright? Those that pollute their inheritances? Shall not take part in this." The Lord explained how you would go about polluting your inheritance above—if you don't carry the Lord's light into the world, you then become as salt that has lost its savor and shall be "cast out and trodden under foot of men" or later He says "thrown down." Salt loses its savor by mixing, diluting, etc. not by anything changing the salt, one cannot do that. One loses their savor by addition, one regains their savor by subtraction; remove the things in your life not of Christ that are holding you back.

## III. The Redemption: Who, How, Etc.?

**Isaiah 52** (continued)

**7** How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

**8** Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.

**9** Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

**10** The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

**11** Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD.

**12** For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rearward.

**13** Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

**14** As many were astonied at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

**15** So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

That finishes up Isaiah 52. Let's see if we can figure out who this is talking about and how they will go about redeeming Zion, shall we?

**Isaiah 28**

**21** For the Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, ***his strange work;*** and bring to pass his act, ***his strange act.***

**22** Now therefore ***be ye not mockers,*** lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth.

**23** Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech.

**24** Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground?

**25** When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rie in their place?

**26** For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him.

**27** For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod.

**28** Bread corn is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen.

**29** This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.

**(15-15) Isaiah 28:23–29. What Was the Significance of the Parable of Sowing and Threshing?**

Keil and Delitzsch explained the beauty and power of Isaiah's parable, noting that "fitches" (Isaiah 28:25) were probably the black poppy, and cummin (see v. 25) the same as modern cummin. Both are herbs derived from the seeds of the plants mentioned.

"The ploughing … which opens the soil, i.e. turns it up in furrows, and the harrowing … which breaks the clods, take place to prepare for the sowing, and therefore not interminably, but only so long as is necessary to prepare the soil to receive the seed. When the seed-furrows have been drawn in the levelled surface of the ground … then the sowing and planting begin; and this also takes place in various ways, according to the different kinds of fruit. … The wheat he sows carefully in rows … , i.e. he does not scatter it about carelessly, like the other two, but lays the grains carefully in the furrows, because otherwise when they sprang up they would get massed together, and choke one another … the barley is sown in a piece of the field specially marked off for it, or specially furnished with signs … ; and … , the spelt [rye] … , along the edge of it, so that spelt forms the rim of the barley field. It is by a divine instinct that the husbandman acts in this manner; for God, who established agriculture at the creation … has also given men understanding. …

"… (For) [v. 27] introduces another proof that the husbandman is instructed by God, from what he still further does. He does not use the threshing machine … which would entirely destroy the more tender kinds of fruit, but knocks them out with a staff. … Is bread corn crushed?

> Oh no, he does not crush it. This would be the case if he were to cause the wheel … of the threshing cart with the horses harnessed in front to rattle over it with all their might. … The wise, divinely inspired course adopted by the husbandman in the treatment of the field and fruit, is a type of the wise course adopted by the divine Teacher Himself in the treatment of His nation. Israel is Jehovah's field. The punishments and chastisements of Jehovah are the ploughshare and harrow, with which He forcibly breaks up, turns over, and furrows this field. But this does not last for ever. When the field has been thus loosened, smoothed, and rendered fertile once more, the painful process of ploughing is followed by a beneficent sowing and planting in a multi-form and wisely ordered fulness of grace. Again, Israel is Jehovah's child of the threshing-floor [see Isaiah 21:10]. He threshes it; but He does not thresh it only: He also knocks; and when He threshes, He does not continue threshing for ever, i.e. as Caspari has well explained it, He does not punish all the members of the nation with the same severity; and those whom He punishes with greater severity than others He does not punish incessantly, but as soon as His end is attained, and the husks of sin are separated from those that have been punished, the punishment ceases, and only the worst in the nation, who are nothing but husks, and the husks on the nation itself, are swept away by the punishments' [compare Isaiah 1:25; 29:20–21]. This is the solemn lesson and affectionate consolation hidden behind the veil of the parable. Jehovah punishes, but it is in order that He may be able to bless. He sifts, but He does not destroy. He does not thresh His own people, but He knocks them; and even when He threshes, they may console themselves in the face of the approaching period of judgment, that they are never crushed or injured." (*Commentary,* 7:2:14–17.)
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),
>
> p. 163)

**3 Nephi 24**

> **1** … Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. …
>
> **5** And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger, and fear not me, saith the Lord of Hosts.
>
> **6** For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.
>
> **7** Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts…
>
> **16** Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.
>
> **17** And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.
>
> **18** Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

**3 Nephi 25**

> **4** Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

This time period, where the tares and wheat are mixed together, has been and will continue to be described as a "testing" or "proving" time period for the "who" of the Redemption of Zion… This testing and tribulation process is explained beautifully in this parable and commentary provided in the student manual. This identifies the one doing the testing as ***a servant*** and not as The Master himself. This, taken in conjunction with 3 Nephi 24 and 25, paints a clear picture. It is interesting to note that the Lord, before and during the testing, tells the saints "not to mock" because the Lord's work is a "strange work," the Lord's act is a "strange act." I believe this tells us a lot about the Marvelous Work and a Wonder.

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** in *Doctrines of Salvation* put forth this:

> ***When*** the lost tribes come…it ***will be*** a most ***wonderful*** sight and ***marvelous*** thing when they do come to Zion.
>
> (*Doctrines of Salvation,* p. 604)

It is important to note that when that quote was given, the Church was already global, and he used the words ***"when"*** and ***"will be,"*** meaning it was yet a future event. There are things that are a part of the marvelous work and a wonder, but yet are not the marvelous work and a wonder spoken of by Jeremiah, who said:

**Jeremiah 16**

> **14** … it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;
>
> **15** But, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north…

Don't be found mocking, for fools mock, but they ***shall*** mourn. Those that "feared the Lord" began talking and preaching amongst themselves. It is fascinating that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at this point in time would have already been restored, yet it said these people ***just began*** to start meeting and talking amongst each other. Were they not speaking before at church? Apparently not… A new medium, possibly something like YouTube, allowed these people who had never met before to start talking with each other. To further prove that this wasn't a church-centered event, the Lord then tells angels to make recordings of these people's doings (it was recorded ***before*** Him); as we all well know, the official doings of the church are extremely well documented. This also ties us once again, back to Isaiah chapter 10 (amongst others), and thus this same time period, where the fatherless, widows, poor, etc. are being trampled. But who is the servant doing the testing?

**Elder Heber C. Kimball** (among others) clearly give us the answer:

> An army of Elders will be sent to the four quarters of the earth to search out the righteous and warn the wicked of what is coming. All kinds of religions will be started and miracles performed that will deceive the very elect if that were possible. Our sons and daughters must live pure lives so as to be prepared for what is coming. After a while the Gentiles will gather by the thousands to this place, and Salt Lake City will be classed among the wicked cities of the world. A spirit of speculation and extravagance will take possession of the Saints, and the results will be financial bondage. Persecution comes next and all true Latter-day Saints will be tested to the limit. Many will apostatize and others will be still not knowing what to do. Darkness will cover the earth and gross darkness the minds of the people. The judgments of God will be poured out on the wicked to the extent that our Elders from far and near will be called home, or in other words the gospel will be taken from the Gentiles and later on carried to the Jews. The western boundary of the State of Missouri will be swept so clean of its inhabitants that as President Young tells us, when you return to that place, there will not be left so much as a yellow dog to wag his tail. Before that day comes, however, the Saints will be put to a test that will try the integrity of the best of them. The pressure will become so great that the more righteous among them will cry unto the Lord day and night until deliverance comes… [For] the time is coming when we will be mixed up in these now peaceful valleys to that extent that it will be difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God. Then, brethren, look out for the great sieve, for there will be a great sifting time, and many will fall; for I say

unto you there is a test, a Test, a TEST coming, and who will be able to stand? This church has before it many close places through which it must pass before the work of God is crowned with victory. To meet the difficulties that are coming it will be necessary for you to have knowledge of the truth of this work for yourselves. The difficulties will be of such character that the man or woman who does not possess this personal knowledge or witness will fall. If you have not got the testimony, live right and call upon the Lord and cease not 'till you obtain it. If you do not, you will not stand... ***Then the Prophet Joseph and others will make their appearance and those who have remained faithful will be selected to return to Jackson County, Missouri and take part in the building of that beautiful city, the New Jerusalem.***

(May 1868, in *Deseret News,* 23 May 1931; see also *Conference Report,* Oct. 1930, p. 58–59; Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball,* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1945, p. 446, Smith, Robert W. and Elisabeth A., *Scriptural and Secular Prophecies Pertaining to The Last Days,* Ninth Edition, Pyramid Press, SLC, UT, 1947, pp. 134–138; *Deseret News,* May 23, 1931; W. Cleon Skousen, *Prophecy and Modern Times,* pp. 31–33, An Army of Elders, May 1868, Heber C. Kimball Reported by his son J. Golden Kimball, CR October 1930, p. 58. See also Prophetic Sayings of Heber C. Kimball to Sister Amanda H. Wilcox)

Joseph Smith Jr. is the servant who is to return, test, and select those who have remained worthy—he is the servant who was talked about in 3 Nephi chapters 20–25... But do we have more proof of this? Yes we do.

**Joseph Smith Senior** gave Joseph Smith Jr. a patriarchal blessing in which he said:

Thou hast been an obedient son: the commands of thy father and the reproofs of thy mother, thou hast respected and obeyed— for all these things the Lord my God will bless thee. Thou hast been called, even in thy youth to ***the*** great work of the Lord: to do a work in this generation which no other man would do as thyself, in all things according to the will of the Lord. ***A marvelous work and a wonder has the Lord wrought by thy hand, even that which shall prepare the way for the remnants of his people to come in among the Gentiles, with their fulness, as the tribes of Israel are restored.*** I bless thee with the blessings of thy fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and even the blessings of thy father Joseph, the son of Jacob. Behold, he looked after his posterity in the last days, when they should be scattered and driven by the Gentiles, and wept before the Lord: he sought diligently to know from whence the son should come who should bring forth the word of the Lord, by which they might be enlightened, and brought back to the true fold, and his eyes beheld thee, my son: his heart rejoiced and his soul was satisfied, and he said, As my blessings are to extend to the utmost bounds of the everlastings hills; as my father's blessing prevailed above the blessings of his progenitors, and as my branches are to run over the wall, and my seed are to inherit the choice land whereon the ***Zion of God shall stand in the last days,*** from among my seed, scattered with the Gentiles, shall a choice Seer arise whose bowels shall be as a fountain of truth, whose loins shall be girded with the girdle of righteousness, whose hands shall be lifted with acceptance before the God of Jacob to turn away his anger from his annointed, whose heart shall meditate great wisdom, whose intelligence shall circumscribe and comprehend the deep things of God, and whose mouth shall utter the law of the just: ***His feet shall stand upon the neck of his enemies, and he shall walk upon the ashes of those who seek his destruction:*** with wine and oil it shall he be sustained, and he shall feed upon the heritage of Jacob his father: the just shall desire his society, and the upright in heart shall be his companions: No weapon formed against him shall prosper, and ***though the wicked mar him for a little season,*** he shall be like ***one rising up in the heat of wine— he shall roar in his strength,*** and the Lord shall put to flight his persecutors: he shall be blessed like the fruitful olive, and his memory shall be as sweet as the choice cluster of the first ripe grapes. Like a sheaf fully ripe, gathered into the garner, so shall he stand before the Lord, having produced a hundred fold. Thus spake my father Joseph. Therefore, my son, I know for a surety that these things will be fulfilled, and I confirm upon thee all these blessings. Thou shalt live to do the work which the Lord shall command thee: thou shalt hold the keys of this ministry, ***even the presidency of this church, both in time and in eternity.*** Thy heart shall be enlarged, and thou shalt be able to fill up the measure of thy days according to the will of the Lord. ***Thou shalt speak the word of the Lord and the earth shall tremble; the mountains shall move and the rivers shall turn out of their course.*** Thou shalt escape the edge of the sword, and put to flight the armies of the wicked. At thy word the lame shall walk, the deaf shall hear and the blind shall see. Thou shalt be gathered to Zion and in the goodly land thou shalt enjoy thine inheritance; thy children and thy children's children to the latest generation; for thy name and the names of thy posterity shall be recorded in the book of the Lord, even in the book of blessings and genealogies, for their joy and benefit forever. And now, my son, what more shall I say? Thou art as a fruitful olive and a choice vine: thou shalt be laden with precious fruit. Thousands and tens of thousands shall come to a knowledge of the truth through thy ministry, and thou shalt rejoice with them in the Celestial Kingdom: ***Thou shalt stand upon the earth when it shall reel to and fro as a drunken man, and be removed out of its place: thou shalt stand when the mighty judgments go forth to the destruction of the wicked: thou shalt stand on mount Zion when the tribes of Jacob come shouting from the north, and with thy brethren, the sons of Ephraim, crown them in the name of Jesus Christ...***"

(*The Joseph Smith Papers,* Blessing from Joseph Smith Sr., 9 December 1834)

**3 Nephi 21**

**10** But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, although he shall be [a]marred because of them. Yet I will heal him, for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.

**Footnote 10a marred**

Doctrine and Covenants 135:1–3

*Announcement of the martyrdom of Joseph Smith the Prophet and his brother, Hyrum Smith...*

**3 Nephi 21:9–11. "My Servant"**

A careful reading of 3 Nephi 21:9–11 suggests that the Lord was referring to the Prophet Joseph Smith when he said, "The life of my servant shall be in my hand" (v. 10; see also Isaiah 52:13–15, 3 Nephi 20:43–44).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (1996), PDF Version, p. 143)

**Parley P. Pratt**, when he learned of Joseph Smith's death:

I walked onward, weighed down as it were unto death. When I could endure it no longer, I cried out aloud, saying, 'Oh, Lord, in the name of Jesus Christ I pray Thee, show me what these things mean, and what I shall say to Thy people?' "Suddenly the Spirit of God came upon me, and filled my heart with joy and gladness indescribable; and while the spirit of revelation glowed in my bosom with as visible a warmth and gladness as if it were fire, the Spirit said unto me, 'Lift up your head and rejoice. For behold, it is well with my servants Joseph and Hyrum. ***My servant Joseph still holds the keys of my kingdom in this dispensation, and he shall stand in due time on the earth, in the flesh, and fulfill that to which he is appointed.'"***

(*Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt,* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1938, 1970), p. 333)

**Brigham Young**

Joseph Smith, Junior, ***will again be on this earth dictating plans***... and he will never cease his operations, under the directions of the Son of God, until the last ones of the children of men are saved that can be, from Adam till now.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 7, Discourse 45, p. 289, October 9, 1859)

**Brigham Young**

> There is an almighty work to perform in the spirit world. Joseph has not yet got through there. When he finishes his mission in the spirit world, ***he will be resurrected,*** but he is not yet done there. ... ***When his spirit again quickens his body, he will ascend to heaven, present his resurrected body to the Father and the Son, receive his commission as a resurrected being, and visit his brethren on this earth, as did Jesus after His resurrection.***
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 4, Discourse 52, pp. 285–286, March 15, 1857)

For more on this, see Section III, Chapters 1 and 2: "Joseph Smith to Return" and "Joseph Smith to Fulfill."

**Doctrine and Covenants 101: 55–58; 103:15–28**

> And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and ***gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house,*** save those only whom I have appointed to tarry; And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard; for it is mine; I have bought it with money. Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen. And inasmuch as they gather together against you, avenge me of mine enemies, that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land. ...
>
> Behold, I say unto you, the redemption of Zion must needs come by power; Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel. For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ye must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm. And as your fathers were led at the first, ***even so shall the redemption of Zion be.*** Therefore, let not your hearts faint, for I say not unto you as I said unto your fathers: Mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence. But I say unto you: Mine angels shall go up before you, ***and also my presence,*** and in time ye shall possess the goodly land.
>
> ***Verily, verily I say unto you, that my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., is the man to whom I likened the servant to whom the Lord of the vineyard spake in the parable which I have given unto you. Therefore let my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., say unto the strength of my house, my young men and the middle aged—Gather yourselves together*** unto the land of Zion, upon the land which I have bought with money that has been consecrated unto me.
>
> And let all the churches send up wise men with their moneys, and purchase lands even as I have commanded them. And inasmuch as mine enemies come against you to drive you from my goodly land, which I have consecrated to be the land of Zion, even from your own lands after these testimonies, which ye have brought before me against them, ye shall curse them; And whomsoever ye curse, I will curse, and ye shall avenge me of mine enemies. And ***my presence shall be with you even in avenging me of mine enemies,*** unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me. Let no man be afraid to lay down his life for my sake; for whoso layeth down his life for my sake shall find it again. And whoso is not willing to lay down his life for my sake is not my disciple.

**D&C 103:16. Who Is the Man Who Will Lead the Saints As Moses Led Israel?**

> **Elder John A. Widtsoe** wrote: "... Yet, the meaning as set forth in the scriptures, is very simple. In modern revelation the President of the Church is frequently compared to Moses. Soon after the organization of the Church, the Lord said, 'no one shall be appointed to receive commandments and revelations in this church excepting my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., for he receiveth them even as Moses' (D. & C. 28:2) (D&C 107:91) ..." (*Evidences and Reconciliations,* 1:197.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 250)

**Joseph Smith** said:

> The Savior said when these tribulations should take place, it should be committed to a man who should be a witness over the whole world: the keys of knowledge, power and revelations should be revealed to a witness who should hold the testimony to the world. It has always been my province... Just at the time when some men think that I have no right to the keys of the priesthood—just at that time I have the greatest right. ...
>
> All the testimony is that the Lord in the last days would commit the keys of the Priesthood to a witness over all people. Has the Gospel of the kingdom commenced in the last days? And will God take it from the man until He takes him Himself? I have read it precisely as the words flowed from the lips of Jesus Christ. John the revelator saw an angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on earth.
>
> The scripture is ready to be fulfilled, when great wars, famines, pestilences, great distress, judgements, etc. are ***ready*** to be poured out on the inhabitants of the earth. John saw the angel having the holy Priesthood, who should preach the everlasting Gospel to all nations. God had an angel—a special messenger—ordained and prepared for that purpose in the last days. Woe, woe, be to that man or set of men who lift up their hands against God and His witness in these last days: for they shall deceive almost the very chosen ones!
>
> ("Interpretation of Scripture," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 364–365)

Continuing in **3 Nephi 21**: 11–25

> **11** Therefore it shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words, who am Jesus Christ, which the Father shall cause [Joseph Smith] to bring forth unto the Gentiles, and shall give unto [Joseph Smith] power that he shall bring them forth unto the Gentiles, (it shall be done even as Moses said) they shall be cut off from among my people who are of the covenant.
>
> **12** ***And my people who are a remnant of Jacob*** shall be among the Gentiles, yea, in the midst of them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he go through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.
>
> **13** Their hand shall be lifted up upon their adversaries, and all their enemies shall be cut off.
>
> **14** Yea, wo be unto the Gentiles except they repent; for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Father, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots;
>
> **15** And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strongholds;
>
> **16** And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thy land, and thou shalt have no more soothsayers;
>
> **17** Thy graven images I will also cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee, and thou shalt no more worship the works of thy hands;
>
> **18** And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee; so will I destroy thy cities.
>
> **19** And it shall come to pass that all lyings, and deceivings, and envyings, and strifes, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, shall be done away.
>
> **20** For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel;
>
> **21** And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.

**22** But if they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among ***this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance;***

**23** And they shall assist my people, ***the remnant of Jacob,*** and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.

**24** And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem.

**25** And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst.

Which really is a repeat, and in some cases a clarification, of what the Lord had taught in other places:

**3 Nephi 20**

**14** And the Father hath commanded me that I should give unto you this land, for your inheritance.

**15** And I say unto you, that if the Gentiles do not repent after the blessing which they shall receive, after they have scattered my people—

**16** Then shall ye, who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, go forth among them; and ye shall be in the midst of them who shall be many; and ye shall be among them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, and as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he goeth through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

**17** Thy hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off.

**18** And I will gather my people together as a man gathereth his sheaves into the floor.

**19** For I will make my people with whom the Father hath covenanted, yea, I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass. And thou shalt beat in pieces many people; and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. And behold, I am he who doeth it.

**20** And it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that the sword of my justice shall hang over them at that day; and except they repent it shall fall upon them, saith the Father, yea, even upon all the nations of the Gentiles.

**21** And it shall come to pass that I will establish my people, O house of Israel.

**22** And behold, this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; ***and it shall be a New Jerusalem.*** And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you.

**2 Nephi 15**

**26** And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth; and behold, they shall come with speed swiftly; none shall be weary nor stumble among them.

**27** None shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken;

**28** Whose arrows shall be sharp, and all their bows bent, and their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind, their roaring like a lion.

**29** They shall roar like young lions; yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and shall carry away safe, and none shall deliver.

**30** And in that day they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea; and if they look unto the land, behold, darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.

**1 Nephi 22**

**10** And I would, my brethren, that ye should know that all the kindreds of the earth cannot be blessed unless he shall make bare his arm in the eyes of the nations.

**11** Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to make bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations, in bringing about his covenants and his gospel unto those who are of the house of Israel.

**12** Wherefore, he will bring them again out of captivity, and they shall be gathered together to the lands of their inheritance; and they shall be brought out of obscurity and out of darkness; and they shall know that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer, the Mighty One of Israel.

**15** For behold, saith the prophet, the time cometh speedily that Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men; for the day soon cometh that all the proud and they who do wickedly shall be as stubble; and the day cometh that they must be burned.

**16** For the time soon cometh that the fulness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all the children of men; for he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous.

**17** Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire.

**18** Behold, my brethren, I say unto you, that these things must shortly come; yea, even blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke must come; and it must needs be upon the face of this earth; and it cometh unto men according to the flesh if it so be that they will harden their hearts against the Holy One of Israel.

**19** For behold, the righteous shall not perish; for the time surely must come that all they who fight against Zion shall be cut off.

**20** And the Lord will surely prepare a way for his people, unto the fulfilling of the words of Moses, which he spake, saying: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that all those who will not hear that prophet shall be cut off from among the people.

**2 Nephi 30**

**8** And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall commence his work among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, to bring about the restoration of his people upon the earth.

**9** And with righteousness shall the Lord God judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

**10** For the time speedily cometh that the Lord God shall cause a great division among the people, and the wicked will he destroy; and he will spare his people, yea, even if it so be that he must destroy the wicked by fire.

**11** And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

So who are these "young and middle aged" men, and do we have any further proof or insights on them?

**Doctrine and Covenants 128**

**18** ...for it is necessary in the ushering in of the dispensation of the fulness of times, which dispensation is now beginning to usher in, that ... those things which never have been revealed from the foundation of the world, ***but have been kept hid from the wise and prudent, shall be revealed unto babes and sucklings in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times.***

**2 Nephi 27**

**5** For behold, the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep. For behold, ye have closed your eyes, and ye have rejected the prophets; and your rulers, and the seers hath he covered because of your iniquity.

**6** And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall bring forth unto you the words of a book, and they shall be the words of them which have slumbered.

**7** And behold ***the book shall be sealed;*** and in the book shall be a revelation from God, ***from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof.*** ...

**24** And again it shall come to pass that the Lord shall say unto him that shall read the words that shall be delivered him:

**25** Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but ***have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men***—

**26** Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, ***for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.***...

**33** Therefore, thus saith the Lord, who ***redeemed*** Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.

**34** But when he seeth ***his children, the work of my hands,*** in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.

**Doctrine and Covenants 87**

**4** And it shall come to pass, after many days, slaves shall rise up against their masters, who shall be marshaled and disciplined for war.

**5** And it shall come to pass also that ***the remnants*** who are left of the land will marshal themselves, and shall become exceedingly angry, and shall vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation.

**6** And thus, with the sword and by bloodshed the inhabitants of the earth shall mourn; and with famine, and plague, and earthquake, and the thunder of heaven, and the fierce and vivid lightning also, shall the inhabitants of the earth be made to feel the wrath, and indignation, and chastening hand of an Almighty God, until the consumption decreed hath made a full end of all nations;

**7** That the cry of the saints, and of the blood of the saints, shall cease to come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, from the earth, to be avenged of their enemies.

**8** Wherefore, stand ye in holy places, and be not moved, until the day of the Lord come; for behold, it cometh quickly, saith the Lord. Amen.

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

**32** [For] my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die.

**33** And there shall be earthquakes also in divers places, and many desolations; yet men will harden their hearts against me, and they will take up the sword, one against another, and they will kill one another.

...

**39** And it shall come to pass that ***he that feareth me*** shall be looking forth for the great day of the Lord to come, even for the signs of the coming of the Son of Man.

**40** And they shall see signs and wonders, for they shall be shown forth in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath.

**41** And they shall behold blood, and fire, and vapors of smoke.

**42** And before the day of the Lord shall come, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon be turned into blood, and the stars fall from heaven.

**43** And the remnant shall be gathered unto this place;

...

**65** And with one heart and with one mind, gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you.

**66** And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God;

**67** And the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion.

**68** And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety.

**69** And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another.

**70** And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore we cannot stand.

**71** And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy.

**Moses 7**

**61** And the day shall come that the earth shall rest, but before that day the heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, but my people will I preserve;

**62** And righteousness will I send down out of heaven [Joseph Smith]; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood [144k], to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called ***Zion, a New Jerusalem.***

**Heber C. Kimball** not only identified Joseph Smith as "the servant," he also had the Spirit of Prophesy and Revelation to such an extent that he could see who the "young and middle aged men" would be who would redeem Zion in that day with Joseph Smith:

Take the boys here, the sons of our brethren and sisters, and you may cut them into inch pieces, and they will not forsake this cause, but they will defend it to the last. Some of them may be rough, and perhaps some of them do not pray much, but send them into the vineyard, and then you will see them shew forth the power that is in them. At present the Prophet Joseph's boys lay apparently in a state of slumber, everything seems to be perfectly calm with them, but by and by God will wake them up, and they will roar like the thunders of Mount Sinai.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 4, Discourse 1)

Though Joseph's boys were in a state of slumber, though they were "scattered," yet shall they be woken up at this time and tested. When the test, the Test, the TEST is over, the prophet Joseph openly returns, he selects and gathers those who have remained faithful—the "strength of [the Lord's] house" (D&C 101:55), the "young men, and the middle aged" (D&C 101:55, 103:22, 105:16), the "remnant of Jacob" (2 Ne. 20:21; 3 Ne. 21:12), "Joseph's Boys"—and they are sent into the vineyard and will vex the gentiles with a sore vexation. But why? What causes these young men to finally awake up? What causes them to turn their hearts to their fathers, to Joseph Smith, to the covenants the Lord has made unto the House of Israel, etc?

**Joseph Smith—History 1**

> **38** And again, he quoted the fifth verse thus: Behold, I will reveal unto you ***the Priesthood,*** by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.
>
> **39** He also quoted the next verse differently: And he shall ***plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers. If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming.***

The Prophet Elijah appeared in the Kirtland temple Easter Sunday, April 3, 1836.

**Joseph Smith Jr.** said in 1843:

> Salvation could not come to the world without the mediation of Jesus Christ.
>
> How ***shall*** God come to the rescue of this generation? ***He will send*** Elijah the prophet. The law revealed to Moses in Horeb never was revealed to the children of Israel as a nation.
>
> ("The Mission of Elijah," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 323)

**Joseph Smith** further taught:

> The spirit of Elias is first, Elijah second, and Messiah last. Elias is a forerunner to prepare the way, and the spirit and power of Elijah is to come after, holding the keys of power, building the Temple to the cap stone, placing the seals of the Melchisedec priesthood upon the house of Israel, and making all things ready, then Messiah comes to his temple, which is last of all. Messiah is above the spirit and power of Elijah for he made the world, and was that spiritual rock unto Moses in the Wilderness. Elijah was to come and prepare the way and build up the kingdom, before the coming of the great day of the Lord, although the spirit of Elias might begin it.
>
> (*History,* 1838–1856, volume E-1 [1 July 1843–30 April 1844])

Elias was the spirit of "our Fathers." The spirit and power of Elijah is what planted in us, "the children," the "promises made to our fathers," which would awaken inside of us and get us to redeem Zion and build the New Jerusalem and build that Temple to the cap stone and make all things ready…

**Joseph and Parley P. Pratt** further explained:

> For without Zion, and a place of deliverance, we must fall; because the time is near when the sun will be darkened, and the moon turn to blood, and the stars fall from the heaven, and the earth reel to and fro. Then, if this is the case, and if we are not sanctified and gathered to the places God has appointed, with all our former professions and our great love for the Bible, we must fall; we cannot stand; we cannot be saved; for God will gather out his Saints from the Gentiles, and then comes desolation and destruction, and none can escape except the pure ***in heart*** who are gathered.
>
> ("Importance of Revelation," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 70–71)

**Elder Parley P. Pratt**

> From this scripture [Psalms 102] we learn First, that there is a set time to build up Zion, or the city of which Isaiah speaks, namely, just before the second coming of Christ ; and that when this city is built, the Lord will appear in His glory, and not before. So from this we affirm, that if such a city is never built, then the Lord will never come. Second, we learn that the people and kingdoms are to be gathered together, to serve the Lord, both in Zion and Jerusalem ; and third, that this Psalm was written expressly for the generation to come, and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord,—when they read it and see it fulfilled.
>
> (*A Voice of Warning,* p. 79)

This is the faith as the Brother of Jared (for more information on that check out my paper, Faith as the Brother of Jared). The world isn't wasted at the Great and Dreadful Day because we didn't do enough baptisms for the dead… It would be wasted if we had no New Jerusalem, if we had no Zion… So these promises being planted in the hearts by Elijah, to the children by the fathers, are tied to the Redemption of Zion and the building of the New Jerusalem.

**President Nelson** recently committed us:

> As you study your scriptures during the next six months, I encourage you to make a list ***of all that the Lord has promised He will do for covenant Israel.*** I think you will be astounded! Ponder these promises. Talk about them with your family and friends. ***Then live and watch for these promises to be fulfilled in your own life.***
>
> ("Let God Prevail," General Conference, October 2020)

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

> **11** Wherefore, hearken ye together and let me show unto you even my wisdom—the wisdom of him whom ye say is the God of Enoch, and his brethren,
>
> **12** Who were separated from the earth, and were received unto myself—a city reserved until a day of righteousness shall come—a day which was sought for by all holy men, and they found it not because of wickedness and abominations;
>
> **13** And confessed they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth;
>
> **14** ***But obtained a promise that they should find it and see it in their flesh.***

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Now I understand by this quotation, that God clearly manifested to Enoch the redemption which He prepared, by offering the Messiah as a Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world; and by virtue of the same, the glorious resurrection of the Savior, and the resurrection of all the human family, even a resurrection of their corporeal bodies, is brought to pass; and also righteousness and truth are to sweep the earth as with a flood. And now, I ask, how righteousness and truth are going to sweep the earth as with a flood? I will answer. Men and angels are to be co-workers in bringing to pass this great work, and Zion is to be prepared, even a new Jerusalem, for the elect that are to be gathered from the four quarters of the earth, and to be established an holy city, for the tabernacle of the Lord shall be with them.
>
> ("The Glorious Resurrection," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 84)

What does Elijah plant in the hearts of "the children"? He plants the promise of Zion! "Were it not so, the earth would be utterly wasted at the Lord's coming"! Those whose hearts are "good soil," when the seed is planted become "the pure in heart" who are scattered… Elijah is the one who plants in the hearts of the children ***"the promises,"*** or in other words, ***the promises made to the house of Israel.*** When President Nelson asked us to study the promises made to the house of Israel, he was pointing out this macro last-day timeline point of reference! When the children, who Elijah planted in their hearts ***"the promises made to the house of Israel,"*** would finally "wake up" and cleanse themselves… But I ask, how are men to be resurrected and take part in in the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem as described above?

**Doctrine and Covenants 128**

> **14** Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth,

earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as are the records on the earth in relation to your dead, which are truly made out, so also are the records in heaven. This, therefore, is the sealing and binding power, and, in one sense of the word, the keys of the kingdom, which consist in the key of knowledge.

**15** And now, my dearly beloved brethren and sisters, let me assure you that these are principles in relation to the dead and the living that cannot be lightly passed over, as pertaining to our salvation. For their salvation is necessary and essential to our salvation, as Paul says concerning the fathers—that they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect.

**16** And now, in relation to the baptism for the dead, I will give you another quotation of Paul, 1 Corinthians 15:29: Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?

**17** And again, in connection with this quotation I will give you a quotation from one of the prophets, who had his eye fixed on the restoration of the priesthood, the glories to be revealed in the last days, and in an especial manner this most glorious of all subjects belonging to the everlasting gospel, namely, the baptism for the dead; for Malachi says, last chapter, verses 5th and 6th: Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

So we know who will be doing the redemption and we know how the Lord woke them up or by what power they are brought to turn their hearts to their fathers and the promises made to the House of Israel. Now let us answer the questions of:

## IV. What does the Redemption of Zion look like and how will it take place?

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**11** Mine indignation is soon to be poured out without measure upon all nations; and this will I do when the cup of their iniquity is full.

**12** And in that day all who are found upon the watch-tower, or in other words, all mine Israel, shall be saved.

**13** And they that have been scattered shall be gathered.

**14** And all they who have mourned shall be comforted.

**15** And all they who have given their lives for my name shall be crowned.

**16** Therefore, let your hearts be comforted concerning Zion; for all flesh is in mine hands; be still and know that I am God.

**17** Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered.

**18** They that remain, and are pure in heart, shall return, and come to their inheritances, they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy, to build up the waste places of Zion—

**19** And all these things that the prophets might be fulfilled.

**President Russell M. Nelson**

We live in the day that "our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation." We have front-row seats to witness live what the prophet Nephi saw only in vision, that "the power of the Lamb of God" would descend "upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory."

You, my brothers and sisters, are among those men, women, and children whom Nephi saw. Think of that!

Regardless of where you live or what your circumstances are, the Lord Jesus Christ is your Savior, and God's prophet Joseph Smith is your prophet. He was foreordained before the foundation of the earth to be the prophet of this last dispensation, when "nothing shall be withheld" from the Saints. Revelation continues to flow from the Lord during this ongoing process of restoration.

("Hear Him," General Conference, April 2020)

Let's read about the "power of the Lamb" as it ties directly into the Redemption of Zion.

**1 Nephi 14**

**8** And it came to pass that when the angel had spoken these words, he said unto me: Rememberest thou the covenants of the Father unto the house of Israel? I said unto him, Yea.

**9** And it came to pass that he said unto me: Look, and behold that great and abominable church, which is the mother of abominations, whose founder is the devil.

**10** And he said unto me: Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth.

**11** And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters; and she had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people.

I've seen many "well educated" people erroneously claim that a lot of well-intended ***non-members*** of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will make up and constitute a large section of "the Church of the Lamb." They use a single story from the New Testament (and only this single story) to "prove" their point. The problem? They are ***also*** using the story in the New Testament erroneously, while erroneously misinterpreting the scriptures here in 1 Nephi 14—and no, a double negative doesn't somehow make a positive when it comes to doctrine. They purport that there were "Christians" who were not a part of Christ's church, and Christ had no qualms with them—in fact, He encouraged them, or so they claim. This is, simply put, an ignorant understanding.

In the New Testament Student Manual we read:

**Mark 9:38–40. "He That Is Not against Us Is on Our Part" (see also Luke 9:49–50)**

Some people have wondered how to reconcile the Savior's statement, "He that is not against us is on our part" (Mark 9:40), with His statement, "He that is not with me is against me" (Matthew 12:30). These sayings can be understood by examining the context in which each was made. In the situation recorded in Matthew 12, the Pharisees said that the Savior cast out devils by the power of the devil. The Savior declared that He cast out devils by the power of God and that the Pharisees could not take a neutral position concerning Him: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Matthew 12:30; see the commentary for Matthew 12:30).

The situation recorded in Mark 9:38–40 was different. Instead of Pharisees expressing their lack of belief in Jesus's power, a man who clearly believed in Jesus was casting out devils. However, the Apostle John expressed concern about the man: "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us" (Mark 9:38).

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** suggested reasons for John's concern by explaining that the man "was not one of the inner circle of disciples who traveled, ate, slept, and communed continually with the Master. Luke has it: 'He followeth not *with* us' [Luke 9:49; italics added]; that is, he is not one of our traveling companions. But from our Lord's ***reply it is evident that he was a member of the kingdom, a legal administrator who was acting in the authority of the priesthood and the power of faith.***

> Either he was unknown to John who therefore erroneously supposed him to be without authority or else John falsely supposed that the power to cast out devils was limited to the Twelve and did not extend to all faithful priesthood holders. It is quite possible that the one casting out devils was a seventy [see Luke 10:1, 17]" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 1:417).
>
> ***The Savior's answer to John, recorded in Mark 9:40, reassured John and the Twelve that the man was a disciple with authority, though not an Apostle.***
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual* (2018))

There will only be two churches, and as Brother Hyrum Andrus correctly explained, the Church of the Lamb is the righteous element within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints ("Nephi's Prophecy of the Last Days, Part One"). This is not a "larger group than we realize, consisting of all sorts of Christian denominations"—it is a righteous group, the righteous element within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Period.

**1 Nephi 14**

> **12** And it came to pass that I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and ***its numbers were few,*** because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that ***the church of the Lamb,*** who ***were the saints of God,*** were also upon all the face of the earth; and their dominions upon the face of the earth ***were small,*** because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw.

We need to take a moment to realize that these events could not have possibly happened pre WWII, pre The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints going global. Before that time period the policy of the church was for all converts to immigrate to USA. We need to grasp this or we might not understand the next points of reference!

**1 Nephi 14** (Cont.)

> **13** And it came to pass that I beheld that the great mother of abominations did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, ***to fight against the Lamb of God.***

Has this happened for the Saints of The Lamb worldwide post the church going global? It has not.

**President Nelson** also warned of this time period shortly to come:

> The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do (see Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7). Our safest insurance is to continue to be worthy of admission to His holy house… We have great cause for concern. But we do not need to let our fears displace our faith. We can combat those fears by strengthening our faith.
>
> Why do we need such resilient faith? Because difficult days are ahead. Rarely in the future will it be easy or popular to be a faithful Latter-day Saint. Each of us will be tested. The Apostle Paul warned that in the latter days, those who diligently follow the Lord "shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12). That very persecution can either crush you into silent weakness or motivate you to be more exemplary and courageous in your daily lives… Do whatever it takes to strengthen your faith in Jesus Christ by increasing your understanding of the doctrine taught in His restored Church and by relentlessly seeking truth. Anchored in pure doctrine, you will be able to step forward with faith and dogged persistence and cheerfully do all that lies in your power to fulfill the purposes of the Lord. You will have days when you will be discouraged. So pray for courage not to give up! Sadly, some whom you thought were your friends will betray you. And some things will simply seem unfair.
>
> ("The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior's Second Coming," *Ensign,* April 2020)

After the warfare of Zion begins, most likely as a direct result of the warfare against Zion, we are given the next verse:

**1 Nephi 14** (Cont.)

> **14** And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.

Let's take a moment to stop and read what Elder Orson Pratt had to say about this, after reading the above set of scriptures in 1 Nephi 14.

This is what **Elder Orson Pratt** taught:

> What is it that is going to increase righteousness and the power of God upon the Saints that are scattered abroad upon the face of the earth? It is the increase of righteousness here at headquarters; and as branches of the great vine of the same Church, they will feel the influence of the same Spirit, even before the intelligence can reach them by letter. When you reform and turn away from your sins—when you practice righteousness here, the Saints of God abroad feel stirred up to do the same things, and the Spirit of the Lord rests upon them the same as it does upon the people here, only not to the same extent, because you live at head quarters, at the fountainhead, and you have a greater experience; therefore, your experience, righteousness, and faithfulness, entitle you to more choice gifts than those that have not the same experience.
>
> The power of God will rest upon the Saints of these valleys ***first,*** and then upon the Saints in all the world, just in proportion to their righteousness. The Lord is going to increase power ***here among the people.*** Have we any dangerous circumstances to pass through that render it necessary that more power should be made manifest? Have we got to bear testimony to kings and to the rulers of the earth at the present time? No, we are not called to do this; but those who are in the nations abroad may have this to do.
>
> ("Testimony of God's Servants Faithfully Borne to the Nations—Gentile Opposition—Judgments of God—Redemption of Zion," *Journal of Discourses,* Volume 6, 30)

Finishing our **1 Nephi 14** read:

> **15** And it came to pass that I beheld that the wrath of God was poured out upon that great and abominable church, insomuch that there were wars and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth.
>
> **16** And as there began to be wars and rumors of wars among all the nations ***which belonged to the mother of abominations*** the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold, the wrath of God is upon the mother of harlots; and behold, thou seest all these things—
>
> **17** ***And when the day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon the mother of harlots,*** which is the great and abominable church of all the earth, whose founder is the devil, ***then, at that day,*** the work of the Father shall commence, in ***preparing the way for*** the fulfilling of his covenants, which he hath made to his people who are of the house of Israel.

Let's take a moment to read what **Brother Hyrum Andrus** had to say about this:

> Now in addition to Nephi and to Abinadi, the Savior himself discusses this in III Nephi chapter 16 where in verse 18 you have this statement where he is talking about Zion "Thy watchmen shall lift up thy voice; with the voice together shall they sing, for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion." Then he goes on and in verse 20 says "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God." He says the same thing also in 3 Nephi 20:35. What does it mean to "make bare his arm in the eyes of all nations"? Let me give you an example. He

did this kind of thing once, anciently. There was once a nation where the Lord made bare his arm and manifest his power in great judgments and plagues and manifest his glory as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. What was that nation? The answer is, Egypt. And with power he brought forth and delivered his people out of Egypt.

Let me put it this way: There are going to be little Egypts all over the earth in the last days. There will be people in Germany, France, Italy, England, the countries of the world, and when this era of warfare takes place and the mother of abominations gathers multitudes from among the Gentiles to fight against Zion, then Nephi says, "I beheld the power of God in great glory descend upon the saints of the Lamb, upon the covenant people of the Lord." And where were these people? They were in these various countries of the earth where the Church has been established—and where, by the way, there are now temples, temples not only for the work for the dead and for the facilitating of the basic ordinances of the gospel to the Saints, but temples where they can retreat and where they can be given spiritual direction, and through the sacred ordinances of which the powers of the Spirit will be developed in their midst. As those powers are developed and the Lord steps in to preserve them, then the ensign of Zion will be raised among all people. These people will be preserved by the glory and power of the Lord.

In the meantime in the whole scenario, Zion will be the first group here in America to be cleansed. The end result of this cleansing is going to be the establishment of the Lord's kingdom, the establishment of Zion with glory and with power, the cleansing of America and the establishment of the Lord's program. And then as warfare is made against the outlying areas of Zion, then the Lord will begin to gather his people.

He will say, "Don't go in haste, no reason. I'm going to go before you, and I will be your rearward"—3 Nephi 20 and 21. "And you go out slowly and gather as many people as you can to go with you." Why? Because if they stay behind, what's the other alternative? What was the alternative that Nephi saw? If they reject this, they will be brought down into judgment both spiritually and temporally. That is the general picture. Nephi sees that, and he explains here, going back to verse 10 of 1 Nephi 22, "and I would, my brethren, that ye should know"—now, you've got to know this; this is an important point—"that all kindreds of the earth cannot be blessed...." The forces of iniquity and the powers of unrighteousness are such that all nations of the earth cannot be blessed, "unless he shall make bare his arm in the eyes of the nations." And how is he going to do it? Through his people who are in their midst and where the glory and power is made manifest to preserve them.

Then he goes on, "Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to make bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations, in bringing about his covenants and his gospel unto those who are of the house of Israel." Remember we read 1 Nephi 14, verse 17, where he says that in this era of warfare he is going to perform a preparatory work. That preparatory work in the era of warfare prepares for the gathering of Israel and will be the cleansing of the Saints and the cleansing of America. Then he will begin the great world gathering that's foretold in the scriptures.

He says, "Wherefore, he will bring them again out of captivity, and they shall be gathered together to the lands of their inheritance; and they shall be brought out of obscurity and out of darkness; and they shall know that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer, the Mighty One of Israel." (1 Ne 22:12) This is a time when his arm is made bare, and they know it! "And the blood of that great and abominable church, which is the whore of all the earth, shall turn upon their own heads; for they shall war among themselves, and the sword of their own hands shall fall upon their own heads, and they shall be drunken with their own blood. And every nation which shall war against thee, O house of Israel, shall be turned one against another, and they shall fall into the pit which they digged to ensnare the people of the Lord."

And all that fight against Zion shall be destroyed, and that great whore, who hath perverted the right ways of the Lord, yea, that great and abominable church, shall tumble to the dust and great shall be the fall of it. For behold, saith the prophet, the time cometh speedily that Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men; for the day soon cometh that all the proud and they who do wickedly shall be as stubble; and the day cometh that they must be burned." (1 Ne 22:15–15) Now, is that a glorious picture? It's a rough one, isn't it? Does that indicate that Zion is going to simply sit on the side and watch it? No. Zion is going to be involved; this is a warfare against Zion. This is the era of warfare against Zion.

All right, let's read Nephi's explanation further. He says, "For the time soon cometh that the fulness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all the children of men; for he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous. Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire.

"Behold, my brethren, I say unto you, that these things must shortly come; yea, even blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke must come; and it must needs be upon the face of this earth, and it cometh unto men according to the flesh if it so be that they will harden their hearts against the Holy One of Israel. For behold, the righteous shall not perish; for the time surely must come that all they who fight against Zion shall be cut off. And the Lord will surely prepare a way for his people unto the fulfilling of the words of Moses," where he talks about if they reject Christ, then they will finally be cut off (1 Ne 22:18–19).

Then he goes on and speaks of the ushering in of the Millennial kingdom. Let me ask you to just read that for yourself. But let's turn to another explanation on this whole theme. This is 2 Nephi 6 where Jacob comes back to the same theme. He talks about it—I want to get into it in relation to the Isaiah passages tomorrow evening, so I only want to give you part of it now. Let's turn to verse 13: "Wherefore, they that fight against Zion and the covenant people of the Lord shall lick up the dust of their feet; and the people of the Lord shall not be ashamed. For the people of the Lord are they who wait for him; for they still wait for the coming of the Messiah. And behold, according to the words of the prophet, the Messiah will set himself again the second time to recover them; wherefore, he will manifest himself unto them in power and great glory." This is a real power situation. He goes on to say, "Unto the destruction of their enemies, when that day cometh when they shall believe in him; and none will he destroy that believe in him.

"And they that believe not in him shall be destroyed, both by fire, and by tempest, and by earthquakes, and by bloodsheds, and by pestilence, and by famine. And they shall know that the Lord is God, the Holy One of Israel."

Now, pay particular attention to verse 16 and 17: "For shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?" Now, that's a question. Who is the prey? Zion. So he asks the question, "For shall the prey"—Zion—"be taken from the mighty and the lawful captive delivered? But thus saith the Lord: Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; for the Mighty God shall deliver his covenant people. For thus saith the Lord: I will contend with them that contendeth with thee—And I will feed them that oppress thee, with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine; and all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."

Now, can you see the general picture? This is the Book of Mormon, my brothers and sisters. To many of us, there are two sealed books. One is the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon. And the other is this thing from which I've been reading. That's true! I don't want to be negative on that, but ask yourself if you understand the era of warfare against Zion. It's a sealed record to many of us.

Now, let me turn finally to Christ's explanations. Nephi gives us the basic theme. It's amplified by his brother, Jacob. And when the Savior comes to the Nephites, he really blossoms the picture out and teaches it in some detail, all the record of which we don't have because Mormon

was told not to write the full thing. Nevertheless he explained it in detail. Why? Because this is the day when Israel is going to be redeemed. This is the day when those people among the Nephites to whom he was speaking, their posterity, were going to come in and build the New Jerusalem. So he told them about it. And he told them in detail what would take place. The Savior gives significant, highly significant explanations. Let's turn to some of them.

The prophetic picture in 3 Nephi begins about 3 Nephi 16. There he is talking about the Gentiles, and again he is saying some rather unsavory things about them if they don't repent. He always leaves the door open. If they will repent, then fine, he has his arms wide open, ready to receive them. But if they don't repent, then this is another ballgame. In 3 Nephi 16:10: "And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you: At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischief's, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; and if they shall do all those things, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them." ***Now, are we somewhere near that picture today?***

He goes on in verse 11 and 12 and says, "And then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them. And I will show unto thee, O house of Israel, that the Gentiles shall not have power over you." He's going to break the power of the Gentiles, and they will not have power over the Indian people.

He goes on to say, "And I will remember my covenant unto you, O house of Israel, and ye shall come unto the knowledge of the fulness of my gospel." But then he clarifies, "But if the Gentiles will repent and return unto me, saith the Father, behold they shall be numbered among my people, O house of Israel," they shall be numbered among the people of the Lord. And he says, "And I will not suffer my people, who are of the house of Israel, to go through among them and tread them down, saith the Father. But if they will not turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, I will suffer them, yea, I will suffer my people, O house of Israel, that they shall go through among them, and shall tread them down, and they shall be as salt that hath lost its savor, which is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of my people, O house of Israel." He goes on to talk about the fulfillment of the Lord's covenants at that time.

(NEPHI'S PROPHECY OF THE LAST DAYS, Part 2)

**Joseph Smith** tied together the timing of the redemption as well as this power of the Lamb, Jacob coming to his strength, etc.

Our lives have already become jeopardized by revealing the wicked and blood thirsty purposes of our enemies; and for the future we must cease to do so; all we have said about them is truth, but it is not always wise to relate such truth. Even Jesus the Son of God had to refrain from doing so, and to restrain his feelings many times for the safety of his own person and those of his followers, and had to conceal the righteous purposes of his heart in relation to many things pertaining to his father's Kingdom. When quite a boy he had all the intelligence necessary to rule and govern the Kingdom of the Jews, and could reason with the wisest and most profound doctors of law and divinity, and make their theories and practice to appear like folly compared with the wisdom he possessed, but he was a boy only, and lacked physical strength even to defend his own person, and was subject to cold, to hunger, and to death. So it is with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; we have the principles of revelations and the knowledge within us is sufficient to organize a righteous government upon the earth, and to give universal peace to all mankind if they will receive it; but we lack the physical strength as did our Savior when a child, to defend our principles, and we shall have of necessity to be afflicted, persecuted, and smitten, and to bear it patiently ***until Jacob is of age; then he will take care of himself.***

(*Joseph Smith Papers,* Historian's Office, Martyrdom Account, p. 53)

**D&C 103:11–14. Will The Saints Actually Return to Build Zion in Jackson County?**

Verses 11–14 state that the Lord intended to restore His people to their lands, and that they would "no more be thrown down" (D&C 103:13). It is also clear, however, that this restoration would not happen until after "much tribulation" (v. 12; see also D&C 58:2–4; Notes and Commentary on D&C58:2–4). The Lord warned the Saints in Doctrine and Covenants 103 that, even though He had promised they could return to the land of Zion, if they "pollute[d] their inheritances" through sin, they would lose the Lord's support and be "thrown down" (v. 14). Since this revelation was given, many leaders of the Church have discussed the future return to Jackson County, Missouri. **Elder Orson F. Whitney** said: "Will our mission end here [in Utah]? Is the State of Utah the proper monument of the 'Mormon' People? No. ... The monument to 'Mormonism' will stand in Jackson County, [Missouri]. There the great City will be built: There Zion will arise and shine, 'the joy of the whole Earth,' and there the Lord will come to His temple in His own time, when His people shall have made the required preparation." (In Smith and Sjodahl, Commentary, p. 147.)

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** taught that "the *center place* where the City New Jerusalem is to be built, is in Jackson County, Missouri. It was never the intention to substitute Utah or any other place for Jackson County." (*Doctrines of Salvation,* 3:72.)

**President Brigham Young** said: "Are we going back to Jackson County? Yes. When? As soon as the way opens up. Are we all going? O no! of course not. The country is not large enough to hold our present numbers." (In *Journal of Discourses,*18:355.) He also said that "a portion of the Priesthood will go and redeem and build up the centre Stake of Zion" (in *Journal of Discourses,*11:16).

For other scriptural statements concerning the redemption of Zion, see Doctrine and Covenants103:15–20; see also Doctrine and Covenants 100:13; 101:17–18, 43–62; 105:1–6, 9–15; 136:18; 3 Nephi 20:22; 21:22–25. Enrichment B in the Appendix discusses the concept of Zion as taught in the Doctrine and Covenants.

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 249)

So, the redemption does not begin until the years of tribulation have already started. The Lord here says it will happen after much tribulation, he does not say after all tribulation. It is also made clear here that Jackson County will not be replaced by Salt Lake City or Palmyra New York or by any other location.

**D&C 103:15–20. The Lord's People Will Redeem Zion through His Power**

Doctrine and Covenants 103:15–20 clearly teaches that Zion will not be redeemed by human strength alone. The Lord said that the redemption of modern Zion will resemble the deliverance of ancient Israel from Egypt (see vv. 18–20). The biblical account describes how the Lord attended Israel in a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. In 1873 **Elder Orson Pratt** taught that the return to Jackson County may be accompanied by similar manifestations:

"I expect that when the Lord leads forth his people to build up the city of Zion, his presence will be visible. When we speak of the presence of the Lord we speak of an exhibition of power. ...

"We shall go back to Jackson County. Not that all this people will leave these mountains, or all be gathered together in a camp, but when we go back there will be a very large organization consisting of thousands, and tens of thousands, and they will march forward, the glory of God overshadowing their camp by day in the form of a cloud, and a pillar

of flaming fire by night, the Lord's voice being uttered forth before his army. Such a period will come in the history of this people. ... And his people will go forth and build up Zion according to celestial law.

"Will not this produce terror upon all the nations of the earth? Will not armies of this description, though they may not be as numerous as the armies of the world, cause a terror to fall upon the nations? The Lord says the banners of Zion shall be terrible. ... When the Lord's presence is there, when his voice is heard, and his angels go before the camp, it will be telegraphed to the uttermost parts of the earth and fear will seize upon all people, especially the wicked, and the knees of the ungodly will tremble in that day, and the high ones that are on high, and the great men of the earth." (In *Journal of Discourses,* 15:364.)

This great army of the Lord will not be like the armies of the world. They will not take possession of the land of Zion by force but will go forth under the protection and guidance of the Almighty God to take possession of that which will be rightfully theirs by purchase. (See Topical Guide, "purchase," 402; Notes and Commentary on D&C 105:28–32.) The **Prophet Joseph Smith** recorded that his scribe "saw, in a vision, the armies of heaven protecting the Saints in their return to Zion" (*History of the Church,* 2:381).

The Lord knows in advance what is in store for the Saints. **President Brigham Young** noted: "Before we were driven out of Missouri I had a vision, ... and saw that the people would go to the east, to the north and to the west; but we should go back to Jackson County from the west. When this people return to the Centre Stake of Zion, they will go from the west." Some members of the Church in early Utah were so anxious to return to Jackson County they were reluctant to make improvements to homes and lands they assumed they would abandon. President Young said: "Remarks have been made as to our staying here. I will tell you how long we shall stay here. If we live our religion, we shall stay here in these mountains forever and forever, worlds without end, and a portion of the Priesthood will go and redeem and build up the centre Stake of Zion." (In *Journal of Discourses,* 6:16–17.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 249)

**D&C 103:19–20. Why Did the Lord Promise Modern Israel That Both His Angels and His Presence Would Go before Them?**

The Lord sought to make ancient Israel "a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Exodus 19:6). He told Moses to prepare the people so that He could "come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai" (Exodus 19:11). The people saw the power of God manifested on the mount, and they were fearful. They asked that the Lord not speak directly with them but rather that Moses speak with God and bring His message to them (see Exodus 10:18–21; Deuteronomy 5:22–31). Despite Moses' efforts to sanctify the people, they would not prepare themselves to see God by living the higher laws that would enable them to become a holy nation. Therefore, they were given the "law of carnal commandments" (D&C 84:27) and were led, no longer by the Lord's immediate presence, but by his angels (see D&C 84:23–26; Exodus 23:20; JST, Exodus 34:1–2).

In the final dispensation these circumstances will not exist. Latter-day Saints have been given the higher priesthood and the laws and ordinances that enable them to be brought back into the presence of God (see D&C 84:19–22; 107:18–19). There will be a pure people prepared to receive the Lord when He comes (see Moses 7:62–64; D&C 35:20–21; 100:16). Those who return to redeem Zion will live the laws of the celestial kingdom (see D&C 105:5) and thus will be prepared to be led by the presence of the Lord.

**Elder Orson Pratt** spoke of the need to become a sanctified people. "When we go back to Jackson County, we are to go back with power. Do you suppose that God will reveal his power among an unsanctified people, who have no regard nor respect for his laws and institutions, but who are filled with covetousness? No. When God shows forth his power among the Latter-day Saints, it will be because there is a union of feeling in regard to doctrine, and in regard to everything that God has placed in their hands; and not only a union, but a sanctification on their part, that there shall not be a spot or wrinkle as it were, but everything shall be as fair as the sun that shines in the heavens." (In *Journal of Discourses,* 15:361.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 250)

The Lord constantly told the early Saints that what they were doing was "laying the foundation" and that they were the "ensample" for things in the future... With that in mind we might be able to glean some things from the first "Zion's Camp" to understand how it will play out in our day.

**D&C 103:21–28, 30–35. The Call of Zion's Camp**

The Lord issued a call to the young and middle-aged men of the Church to go to the land of Zion and "avenge me of mine enemies" (D&C 103:25). This passage sounds like a call to arms, for the Lord added, "Let no man be afraid to lay down his life for my sake" (v. 27). This expedition was later known as Zion's Camp.

Several men were called to go on a journey to recruit men and obtain money for Zion's Camp. They were commanded to try to enlist 500 men but to recruit no fewer than 100 men. Zion's Camp was eventually made up of 207 men, 11 women, and 11 children.

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** wrote: "Parley P. Pratt and Lyman Wight, the messengers from the land of Zion, were commanded not to return until they had obtained companies to go up unto the land of their brethren. The companies were to be by tens, or by twenties, or by fifties, or by hundreds, until they had obtained the number of five hundred men. If they could not obtain five hundred, they were to seek diligently to get three hundred, and if they could not obtain three hundred, then they were to obtain one hundred. They were not, however, to go up to the land of Zion until they had obtained at least one hundred. The Prophet Joseph was to go up with them and preside in their midst, for, 'all victory and glory is brought to pass unto you through your diligence, faithfulness and prayer of faith.' Parley P. Pratt was to go with Joseph Smith the Prophet; Lyman Wight with Sidney Rigdon; Hyrum Smith with Frederick G. Williams; Orson Hyde with Orson Pratt, on this mission to raise funds and volunteers to undertake this journey to assist their exiled brethren in the land of Zion." (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 1:485.)

At first this situation might seem puzzling. First the Lord said that Zion must be redeemed by His power. Then He called on the Saints to use their own power, even to armed conflict and loss of life if necessary, to redeem Zion. This is characteristic of how God works with His children. Only His power is sufficient to save. And yet He withholds that power until we make the effort He requires.

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 251)

Heber C. Kimball is the man once again who is going to tie this all together for us, including the "angels and men being coworkers"...

**Heber C. Kimball**

Do you suppose that if Brother Brigham were to die tomorrow, and if Joseph is resurrected, ***which he will be so soon as his mission is filled in the spirit world,*** that Joseph will permit Brother Brigham's body to remain any longer in the grave than may be requisite? No, for he then will have need of the assistance of his faithful resurrected brethren, as he now has of faithful spirits.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 4, Discourse 53, pp. 294–295, March 15, 1857)

**Heber C. Kimball**

> I am pretty sure of one thing—we shall go to Jackson County, Missouri; that is, those who do right and honor their calling, doing what they have been told to do. You will be blessed, and you will see the day when Presidents [Brigham] Young, [Heber C.] Kimball, and [Daniel H.] Wells, and the Twelve Apostles will be in Jackson County, Missouri, laying out your inheritances. In the flesh? Of course. We should look well without being in the flesh! We shall be there in the flesh, and all our enemies cannot prevent it.
>
> Brother Wells, you may write that. You will be there, and Willard [Richards] will be there, and also Jedediah [M. Grant], and Joseph and Hyrum Smith, and David [W. Patten], and Parley [P. Pratt]; and the day will be when I will see those men in the general assembly of the Church of the Firstborn, in the great council of God in Jerusalem, too. Will we want you to be along?
>
> I heard Joseph say twice that Brother Brigham and I should be in that council in Jerusalem, when there should be a uniting of the two divisions of God's government.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 9, Discourse 6, p. 27, April 7, 1861)

**Heber C. Kimball**

> Joseph will be the first man who will rise from the dead, and then all men according to their proper order. (*History of the Church,* 7:340)

In summary, Joseph's Boys/The Remnant/etc. sanctify themselves and develop faith as the Brother of Jared due to the promises that were planted in their hearts taking root, and they are then blessed with the Power of the Lamb—the pillar of fire and cloud. They are then gathered by "the angels" who will be coworkers—these will include Joseph Smith Jr. as the leader and many of the early brethren. The redemption of Zion will take place as the banners of the Lord's camp fly high in the wind, the Lord's presence going with the camp, his terrible voice being uttered from a pillar of fire and a cloud by day, the Lord himself destroying all those in their path. The western boundary of the State of Missouri will be swept so clean of its inhabitants that as President Young tells us, when [the Saints begin to] return to that place, there will not be left so much as a yellow dog to wag his tail. The Saints then "inhabit the desolate cities" as well as build that beautiful city, the New Jerusalem. We will receive our inheritances that we have not polluted, for this land was given unto the tribe of Joseph for an inheritance.

In the hymns of **Redeemer of Israel** and **Ye Elders of Israel** we read:

> Redeemer of Israel, our only delight, on whom for a blessing we call,
> our shadow by day and our pillar by night, our King, our Deliv'rer, our all!
>
> We know he is coming to gather his sheep and lead them to Zion in love,
> for why in the valley of death should they weep or in the lone wilderness rove?
>
> How long we have wandered as strangers in sin and cried in the desert for thee!
> Our foes have rejoiced when our sorrows they've seen, but Israel will shortly be free.
>
> As children of Zion, Good tidings for us. The tokens already appear.
> Fear not, and be just, for the kingdom is ours. The hour of redemption is near.
>
> Ye elders of Israel, come join now with me and seek out the righteous, where'er they may be—
> in desert, on mountain, on land, or on sea—and bring them to Zion, the pure and the free.
>
> The harvest is great, and the lab'rers are few; but if we're united, we all things can do.
>
> We'll gather the wheat from the midst of the tares and bring them from bondage, from sorrows and snares.
>
> O Babylon, O Babylon, we bid thee farewell; we're going to the mountains of Ephraim to dwell!

# The Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees

## Multiple Interpretations

> As you study this parable, consider the following statement by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: "[The Savior's] parables had multiple meanings or applications according to the spiritual maturity of the listener. They had a message for both children and gospel scholars" ("Scripture Reading and Revelation," *Ensign,* Jan. 1995, 8). Look for multiple meanings and applications in this parable (see also Bible Dictionary, "Parables").
>
> ("Unit 22: Day 1, Doctrine and Covenants 101:43–101; 102," *Doctrine and Covenants and Church History Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students*).

There are many interpretations to parables. If you have heard somebody interpret a parable or teach a parable in a different way, good for you and good for them. Someone else's interpretation does not invalidate learning gained from other interpretations. So we need to understand, going into any parable, that there will be multiple interpretations and multiple ways to apply the parable.

## Primary vs. Secondary Interpretations

With that said however, that there are many interpretations or applications of parables that can be of use and edification, that is not what we will be doing in our parable breakdowns. Even though there are multiple interpretations and applications, there is only one primary interpretation or application.

In this book, I will go over parables of the utmost importance that have been used so often in their secondary and tertiary forms that most members don't understand or even know the primary interpretation of the parables.

Can parables be interpreted or likened in multiple ways for the benefit of man? Yes. Can washing the vase and the dishes and placing them on a clean cloth add symbolic weight to traditions and ordinances (Mark 7:4–23)? Yes. The problem comes when the washing of the dishes in the eyes of the participant becomes the primary activity and they neglect the actual primary purpose. Jesus, pointing the Jews towards their behavior in doing this very thing, said you "have omitted the weightier matters of the law" (Matthew 23:23–28).

## Unlocking the Primary Interpretation

Understanding how the Lord teaches is crucial to understanding the primary intent of the parable. Joseph Smith had a laugh at a member who thought that the beast kingdoms described in Daniel's vision were symbols of God's kingdoms. **Joseph Smith** said, "the Lord would never make use of a figure of a beast nor any of the brute kind to represent His Kingdom" (*TPJS,* p. 289). Joseph Smith taught that every jot and tittle of the word had to be literally fulfilled, and this included parables, visions, etc. Joseph Smith, in identifying that the Lord even in a parable or vision wouldn't use something ungodly to represent something godly, clarifies that even the symbols in parables have to make sense.

**Joseph Smith** also taught on another occasion the best way to go about trying to find this primary purpose: "I have a key by which I understand the scriptures. I inquire, what was the question which drew out the answer, or caused Jesus to utter the parable?" (*TPJS,* p. 276–277) Joseph then goes on to explain that the question being answered is the primary interpretation and "all straining on this point is a bubble" (*TPJS,* p. 277).

So in summary, if your interpretation doesn't:

- Answer the question being asked specifically and
- Have all of the symbols make sense,

then what you are teaching is a secondary interpretation of the parable. For it to be the primary interpretation, it must answer the question, and all symbols in the parable must make sense.

## The Question

What drew out the parable?

The Saints were chastened and afflicted because of their transgressions and were "cast out of the land of their inheritances" (i.e., Zion, New Jerusalem in Jackson County Missouri). The Lord, in D&C 101:1–42, proceeds to explain that there will be a time of chastening: "all those who will not endure chastening but deny me cannot be sanctified." He then says that His indignation was soon to be poured out when the cup of the Gentile nation's iniquity is full. The Lord then promises "in that day," meaning in the day that his wrath is poured out because of the people's iniquity being full, "all who are found upon the watchtower, or in other words, all mine Israel, shall be saved. And they that have been scattered shall be gathered. Therefore, let your hearts be comforted concerning Zion; for all flesh is in mine hands. Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered. They that remain, and are pure in heart, shall return, and come to their inheritances…to build up Zion and all these things that the prophets might be fulfilled." The Lord then describes that after that event, the redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem, "they shall prepare themselves, for that which is to come, when the veil of the covering of my temple, in my tabernacle, which hideth the earth, shall be taken off, and all flesh shall see me together."

**D&C 101**

> **23** And prepare for the revelation which is to come, when the veil of the covering of my temple, in my tabernacle, which hideth the earth, shall be taken off, and all flesh shall see me together.
>
> **24** And every corruptible thing, both of man, or of the beasts of the field, or of the fowls of the heavens, or of the fish of the sea, that dwells upon all the face of the earth, shall be consumed;
>
> **25** And also that of element shall melt with fervent heat; and all things shall become new, that my knowledge and glory may dwell upon all the earth.
>
> **26** And in that day the enmity of man, and the enmity of beasts, yea, the enmity of all flesh, shall cease from before my face.

These scriptures describe the Great and Dreadful Day. The Lord then describes conditions in the Millennium and the hope that members should have in the Millennium and that brings us up to verse 42.

So in summary, the Lord gives you the macro last-day timeline.

1. Saints kicked out of Jackson County, Missouri (i.e., Zion, New Jerusalem) →
2. Many days will pass as "the Lord their God is slow to hearken unto their prayers" →
3. The Gentile nation's cup of their iniquity is full →
4. The Redemption of Zion: The wrath of the Lord is poured out without measure. "All who are found on the watchtower, they that remain, and are pure in heart, shall return, and come to their inher-

itances, they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy, to build up the waste places of Zion" and shall be saved. →

5. There they will prepare for the Great and Dreadful Day →
6. The Great and Dreadful Day

After the Lord explains all this, he says "and now, I will show unto you a parable, ***that you may know my will concerning the redemption of Zion."*** We should now clearly understand our "why?" for this parable being given.

## The Folly

Looking at the points of reference above, it should be clear what time period or "point of reference" that this parable is addressing.

The folly of the early Saints in believing that this had to do entirely with them and thus the redemption of Zion also had to deal with them (e.g., Zion's camp), is surpassed only by the folly of members today treating all of this like it had do with the Saints' failure back then and nothing to do with the failure of the Saints today, while also not believing any longer in a Redemption of Zion. So the early Saints believed in the Redemption of Zion, but incorrectly, at the time, believed the parable to be about themselves and thus believed that the Redemption of Zion was at hand—if that wasn't accurate, don't we think that Joseph Smith Jr. would have cleared up that misconception?

Yes! And he did teach and clarify this point of doctrine (a full transcript of what he taught will be provided at the end of this chapter, but this quote is crucial to anti-anti people upfront):

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> The olive trees are 12 stakes which are ***yet*** to be built ***not the Temple in Jackson as some suppose*** for while the 12 olive stakes are being built we will be at peace.
>
> (*Joseph Smith Papers,* 19 July 1840)

Proving that ***the majority of this parable*** was to take place ***in futurity*** from Joseph Smith's time forward (clearly identifying the planting of the 12 olive trees as being future from 1840, meaning everything post the planting of the 12 olive trees as being clearly post 1840) and also proving that Joseph Smith Jr. knew, understood, and taught that this parable had nothing whatsoever to do with the Saints of his time, but of a future date.

We are not in Jackson County Missouri, meaning this parable does not refer to the past for the parable is about the redemption of Zion. That fact alone, even without the Joseph Smith clarification, seems to make the point so obvious that even the simplest amongst the Saints shouldn't be confused on the point.

This parable is about the time period surrounding the redemption and building of New Jerusalem. It is not a parable about why we are not in Jackson County Missouri and it is not a parable about how the early Saints failed to build New Jerusalem etc.

Teaching the Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive trees in this false manner (as though it dealt almost entirely with Joseph Smith's time period) would be like teaching the parable of the ten virgins as though it dealt with the ancient church of Christ!

"When the virgins 'slept,' it actually meant that they died and a thousand plus years passed, and when the procession passed by, the old Saints were resurrected (i.e., woke up), but some found that they had no oil when they woke up and couldn't join the procession. And the procession consisted of all members of the modern church."

Do you see what viewing a parable in that lens does to you? It puts all of the failure, all of the fear, all of the actions on a previous generation and alleviates you, the reader in the present generation, of any guilt or action etc. And thus, the parable would literally hold no value for the Saints in either time period. We know that there is value in the ten virgins parable only because we liken ourselves to the ten virgins and then we scrutinize and try to figure out what the oil is so that we can be ready. Likewise, in this parable, the Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees, if you believe that 99% of the parable had to do with failures of previous Saints and the only thing that has to deal with you is "Yay, we win! Yay, we redeem Zion! Yay, we build New Jerusalem!," it is no different. What value would there be in this parable written specifically for Saints ***to know the will of the Lord regarding the redemption of Zion,*** if none of it had to do with ***the generation that would redeem and build Zion?*** This parable and the ten virgins have more in common than most members realize. The failure of members to build the tower in this parable and their self-justification is exactly why the necessity of oil in the ten virgins is the way it is.

## Before Continuing

What takes place directly before and during the redemption of Zion? And what are some events that occur in conjunction with or shortly after? If this parable, the Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees, does in fact reveal the will of the Lord ***regarding the redemption of Zion,*** knowing/understanding what is to take place surrounding the redemption of Zion, will bring the figures used in the parable into focus.

Take a moment to go back and re-read the points surrounding "The Redemption of Zion" in the Preface. Once you have taken the time to at least familiarize yourself broadly speaking of that time period, let us continue on and read the will of the Lord, a parable concerning the redemption of Zion, and let's see how much sense this parable already makes.

## The Parable

> A certain nobleman had a spot of land, very choice; and he said unto his servants: Go ye unto my vineyard, even upon this very choice piece of land, and plant twelve olive trees; And set watchmen round about them, and build a tower, that one may overlook the land round about, to be a watchman upon the tower, that mine olive trees may not be broken down when the enemy shall come to spoil and take upon themselves the fruit of my vineyard.
>
> Now, the servants of the nobleman went and did as their lord commanded them, and planted the olive trees, and built a hedge round about, and set watchmen, and began to build a tower. And while they were yet laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves: And what need hath my lord of this tower? And consulted for a long time, saying among themselves: What need hath my lord of this tower, seeing this is a time of peace? Might not this money be given to the exchangers? For there is no need of these things. And while they were at variance one with another they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord. And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive trees.
>
> Now, behold, the nobleman, the lord of the vineyard, called upon his servants, and said unto them, Why! what is the cause of this great evil? Ought ye not to have done even as I commanded you, and—after ye had planted the vineyard, and built the hedge round about, and set watchmen upon the walls thereof—built the tower also, and set a watchman upon the tower, and watched for my vineyard, and not have fallen asleep, lest the enemy should come upon you? And behold, the watchman upon the tower would have seen the enemy while he was yet afar off; and then ye could have made ready and kept the enemy from breaking down the hedge thereof, and saved my vineyard from the hands of the destroyer.

> And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry; And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard; for it is mine; I have bought it with money. Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen. And inasmuch as they gather together against you, avenge me of mine enemies, that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land.
>
> And the servant said unto his lord: When shall these things be? And he said unto his servant: When I will; go ye straightway, and do all things whatsoever I have commanded you; And this shall be my seal and blessing upon you—a faithful and wise steward in the midst of mine house, a ruler in my kingdom.
>
> And his servant went straightway, and did all things whatsoever his lord commanded him; and after many days all things were fulfilled.
>
> (Doctrine and Covenants 101:44–62)

## The Figures

Let's go through the parable and identify what we clearly should recognize and relate it back to points in the timeline:

**The Nobleman:** is the Savior

**Vineyard:** is the promised, choice land (i.e., America)

**Servants:** leaders of the church (i.e., People with keys)

**Twelve Olive Trees:** the house of Israel was frequently compared to that of an olive tree (Jacob 5) and the house of Israel consists of 12 tribes; 12 being a symbol of completeness. The trees themselves represent, according to Joseph Smith, "12 stakes" that were to be built in the future from 1840. The function of our churches, temples, wealth etc. is entirely that of gathering scattered Israel and building them up. We refer to these collective units as "stakes." The fruit of the trees includes saving ordinances, temporal salvation, money, converts etc., performed or gained by the house of Israel (i.e., the works). Remember that in the parable, the members of the Church actually planted the olive trees; they got that far along.

**Hedge:** the hedge being in place is what gives the servants/watchman a sense of security, thus it becomes clear that the hedge is the law of the land/lower laws (i.e., "the constitution"). It and the tower held similar functions, the tower was simply greater and more important. (i.e., "earthly laws vs heavenly")

**Watchmen:** are political/civil/etc. leaders, as they are who protect/maintain the hedge

**Enemy/Destroyer:** the Assyrian or scourge

## Periods of Time

### Period of Peace

The Saints did not experience this in 1830. This is further proof that this parable did not take place pre-1840 (and remember that Joseph said this period of peace was to take place ***in the future from 1840***). This period of peace gives birth to the 12 stakes or olive trees. It should be noted that President Brigham Young, almost as soon as Salt Lake City was inhabited, began to immediately send out companies of Saints to settle throughout the land—one might say "they began to plant the olive trees."

### Period of Variance

This is a time period that takes place because of the period of peace, in which people debated the need to build the tower vs simply maintaining the hedge and basking in the fruit. This period might have taken place among the Saints as early as Wilford Woodruff, who "made peace" for the Saints with the manifesto.

### Period of Slothfulness

Not only did they give up on the tower, they began to neglect the hedge and their watching. President Benson warned that the Church had officially reached this point, that we were neglecting our fight for freedom on the hedge. The rationale given for this sloth was because of the love of money. Full stop.

**Harold B. Lee**

> We are tested, we are tried, we are going through some of the severest tests today and we don't realize perhaps the severity of the tests we are going through. In those days there were murderings, there were mobbings, there were drivings. They were driven out into the desert, they were starving and they were unclad, and they were cold. They came here to this favored land. We are the inheritors of what they gave to us. But what are we doing with it? Today we are basking in the lap of luxury, the like of which we've never seen before in the history of the world. It would seem that probably this is the most severe test of any test that we've ever had in the history of this Church.
>
> (Christmas address to Church employees, Dec. 13, 1973)

**Ezra Taft Benson**

> Do you know what peace and prosperity can do to a people—It can put them to sleep. ("Our Obligation and Challenge," Regional Representatives' Seminar, Sept. 30, 1977)

### Period of Wickedness (not keeping commandments)

This is now a point in time where members have given up on the tower, neglecting their watch duties and the hedge, and now they are watering down or completely making obsolete the commandments of God. They are going "hand in hand" with Babylon. As **President Heber C. Kimball** put it, it would become impossible to "tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God." Joseph Smith will be discerning between the righteous and wicked in the Church (gone over in Section 3, Chapter 2), ergo, there has to be an unrighteous element established in the church ***before that point.*** The Family: A Proclamation to the World given in 1995 is a warning of this time period.

### Period of Breaking Down the Hedge and Robbing the Vineyard

This is the period of the Assyrian breaking down the laws of the land, the protections and freedoms thereof etc. (the hedge). Isaiah chapter 10 goes over the Assyrian breaking down the hedges (verses 1–5) as well as robbing the eggs from the nest (v. 14). **Joseph Smith** in his sermon said, "Then the Enemy shall come as a thief in the night and scatter the servants abroad…This Nation will be on the very verge of crumbling to pieces and tumbling to the ground ***and when the constitution is upon the brink of ruin*** this people will be the Staff up[on] which the Nation shall lean and they shall bear the constitution away from the *very* verge of destruction." (*The Joseph Smith Papers,* 19 July 1840). This once again confirms the connection between "the enemy" and "the Assyrian" for both destroy the laws of the land and also confirms the connection between the hedge and the laws of the land as they are what was broken down.

## Period of Separation and Capitulation

This is when the servants flee from the hedge and capitulate to the Assyrian. This is the period where the focus of the Church is drawn to that of the will of the Assyrian over that of the twelve olive trees. The problem in the eyes of many members and leaders of the Church become that of the Assyrian's will versus that of the Lord's will and His vineyard. And it is explained later in the parable that if the tower had been built, this would never have happened. The Family Proclamation states "Further, we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets." A key component to understand then becomes "the disintegration of the family," and when we see "the servants flee" from upholding the family, in the name of inclusivity and tolerance.

## Period of Chastisement

This is the rebuking from the Lord. If the leaders and members of the church had built the tower, the capitulation and losses to the Assyrian would not have occurred. The Lord says that he (the nobleman) ***personally goes to the servants,*** which narrows down this group.

**Doctrine and Covenants 112**

> **22** Inasmuch as they shall humble themselves before me, and abide in my word, and hearken to the voice of my Spirit.
>
> **23** Verily, verily, I say unto you, darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the people, and all flesh has become corrupt before my face.
>
> **24** Behold, vengeance cometh speedily upon the inhabitants of the earth, a day of wrath, a day of burning, a day of desolation, of weeping, of mourning, and of lamentation; and as a whirlwind it shall come upon all the face of the earth, saith the Lord.
>
> **25** And upon my house shall it begin, and from my house shall it go forth, saith the Lord;
>
> **26** First among those among you, saith the Lord, who have professed to know my name and have not known me, and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house, saith the Lord.

## Period of Joseph Smith's Return

We learn in D&C 103:21 that this servant is Joseph Smith and lookey here, this is exactly the time period that Joseph is to be returning.

**Doctrine and Covenants 103**

> **15** Behold, I say unto you, ***the redemption of Zion must needs come by power;***
>
> **16** Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel.
>
> **17** For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ***ye must needs be led out of bondage by power,*** and with a stretched-out arm.
>
> **18** And as your fathers were led at the first, even so shall the redemption of Zion be.
>
> **19** Therefore, let not your hearts faint, for I say not unto you as I said unto your fathers: Mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence.
>
> **20** But I say unto you: Mine angels shall go up before you, ***and also*** my presence, and in time ye shall possess the goodly land.
>
> **21** Verily, verily I say unto you, that ***my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., is the man to whom I likened the servant to whom the Lord of the vineyard spake in the parable*** which I have given unto you.
>
> **22** Therefore let my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., say unto the strength of my house, my young men and the middle aged—Gather yourselves together unto the land of Zion, upon the land which I have bought with money that has been consecrated unto me.

People constantly ask "when will Joseph Smith make his open appearance?" As far as holy writ, this is the only thing we have to pinpoint down the timing of his open return.

## Period of Gathering

This is a period where Joseph is discerning and gathering "the strength of mine house," the "young and middle aged"—one might say "the Lord's youth battalion." The ten tribes as a body do not return (are not "gathered") until after the Redemption of Zion, but they are being made ready.

There will be those who will be asked to tarry, who are worthy. They are being asked to tarry for a specific, foreordained mission.

## Period of Redemption

This is when the Lord, with these individuals, redeem Zion. These are Joseph's Boy (Chapter Six). The Lord in the 1830's (after Zion's camp) told the Saints to purchase the land in Jackson Country legally so that at this time the Lord would be justified in taking this specific land by force because "I have bought it with money." So in the parable, when the redemption occurs, the land has already been bought.

It is important to mention the enemy's walls, towers, watchmen, etc. because there are some people who continue to hypothesize that "the tower" represents the temple (despite Joseph Smith's clear teaching to the contrary). However the Lord here says that the enemy ***has towers,*** as well as ***watchmen.*** The Lord would not compare ***his temple*** with that of some other religion's sacred building and make them equal. Remember, the Lord would not make use of a beast to compare to something holy, ergo the Lord would not make such a comparison using His house. However, a member of the Church in political office defending the hedge could be compared to an enemy of the Lord in politics on another wall/hedge. Also, the Lord only has one tower whereas the enemy has multiple towers (D&C 105:16), so once again, the tower is not the temple.

## Period of Gathering to New Jerusalem

Gathering the residue to New Jerusalem, or as the Lord says in the parable, "that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land" (D&C 101:58).

## Period of the Ultimatum

The parable says "inasmuch as they gather together against you, avenge me of mine enemies" (D&C 101:58), or as Nephi has it described:

**1 Nephi 14**

> **7** For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men; a work which shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or on the other—either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds unto their being brought down into captivity, ***and also into destruction, both temporally and spiritually,*** according to the captivity of the devil, of which I have spoken.

## Recap

I hope that after having taken the time to learn the macro timeline and now having read this parable, it becomes self-evident what is happening in this parable. I would also say that this parable is yet another proof that Joseph Smith will return, much like 2 Nephi 27, there was

not "another servant" that was promised. And the Savior specifically identified this servant in this parable as Joseph Smith by name (D&C 103:21). As the student manual for the church makes clear:

**Doctrine and Covenants 103:21–28. The Lord commands the Prophet Joseph Smith to go to Zion**

> In December 1833 the Lord revealed a parable regarding the redemption of the land of Zion. In that parable "a certain nobleman" had his servants plant 12 olive trees on a "very choice piece of land" (D&C 101:44). He commanded his servants to "set watchmen round about them, and build a tower, that one may overlook the land" and protect it from the enemy (D&C 101:45). However, the servants did not complete the tower, and the enemy "came by night, and … destroyed their works, and broke down the olive-trees" (see D&C 101:46–51). The nobleman, the Lord of the vineyard, then said to one of his servants, "Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, … and go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard" (D&C 101:55–56).
>
> In the revelation recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 103, the Lord identified the Prophet Joseph Smith as the servant in the parable ***who would*** "redeem," or reclaim, the vineyard (see D&C 103:21).
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (2018), Chapter 41)

## The Tower

Hopefully what the tower represents is starting to become self-evident in your mind. But for further edification let's investigate this a little further. What do we know about the tower?

1. We know the Saints were commanded by the Lord to build it.
2. They started laying the foundation—they actually started to build it (dedicating land is not starting to build it) and we also know that the Kirtland temple was built and it didn't stop the Saints from being driven out. We also know the Nauvoo temple was built—it also didn't stop the Saints from being driven out. Ergo, this has nothing to do with the temple in Jackson County because a temple in and of itself was not and is not enough to keep the enemy at bay.
3. We know that the debate on following through was fought entirely over money and the time of peace, meaning that they either (a) thought that building it would disrupt the peace, (b) thought that, because there was peace, there was no need for it, or (c) they became greedy, selfish and prideful, and they decided that they knew a better way to use resources, or they simply wanted the resources for themselves and were justifying not giving them up.
4. The enemy had towers .
5. Lastly, and the most telling of all, is that the building of this tower would have prevented the damage dealt by the Assyrian to the Saints. So, when determining what the tower is, ask the question, "would _____ have prevented the damage?" If the answer is "no," then you've got your tower wrong!

What has the Lord commanded us to do, that if we would have done, it would have protected us from the effects of the destroyer entirely (this prophesied damage)?

**Doctrine and Covenants 78**

> **13** Behold, this is the preparation wherewith I prepare you, and the foundation, and the ensample which I give unto you, whereby you may accomplish the commandments which are given you;
>
> **14** That through my providence, notwithstanding the tribulation which shall descend upon you, ***that the church may stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world;***
>
> **15** That you may come up unto the crown prepared for you, and be made rulers over many kingdoms, saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Zion, who hath established the foundations of Adam-ondi-Ahman;

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** also gives us a hint:

> And so we raise the warning voice and say: Take heed; prepare; watch and be ready. There is no security in any course except the course of obedience and conformity and righteousness.
>
> For thus saith the Lord: "The Lord's scourge shall pass over by night and by day, and the report thereof shall vex all people; yea, it shall not be stayed until the Lord come; …
>
> "Nevertheless, Zion shall escape if she observe to do all things whatsoever I have commanded her," saith the Lord.
>
> "But if she observe not to do whatsoever I have commanded her, I will visit her according to all her works, with sore affliction, with pestilence, with plague, with sword, with vengeance, with devouring fire." (D&C 97:23, 25–26.)
>
> ("Stand Independent Above All Other Creatures," General Conference, April 1979)

Here the Lord identifies that the building of the tower would allow us to be independent of all creatures under heaven, and if we don't build it, we will have to face the scourge.

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**, after reading those same scriptures, said:

> This way of escape, insuring the protection of the Lord, is a very simple one. Unfortunately, many of the people of Zion have refused to take advantage of this promise. As I observe conditions among the people I cannot see how we are going to escape when the judgments are to pass over the nations, which are promised in this revelation and in others which I cannot take time to read. Because of our disobedience and our failure to keep the commandments of the Lord, the righteous, as in times past, may be called upon to suffer with the unrighteous among us.
>
> (*Doctrines of Salvation,* Vol. 3, p. 32)

**(B-5) Geographical Designations of Zion: Places of Safety**

> Ancient Jerusalem, and particularly the temple site of that city, has been referred to as Mount Zion (see 2 Samuel 5:7–9; 1 Kings 8:1; Isaiah 29:7–8), and members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have used the term *Zion* to identify their own locations (see Talmage, *Articles of Faith,* p. 347), but as used in the Doctrine and Covenants, *Zion* most often refers either to the people and their condition of purity or to the center place of Zion in the last days—namely, Jackson County, Missouri.
>
> Though Zion is foretold in other scriptures (see 3 Nephi 21:22–25; Ether 13:2–12; Moses 7:61–64), only in the Doctrine and Covenants can be found the directives for its establishment, its laws and principles, and its location. The **Prophet Joseph Smith** taught that the New Jerusalem would be the first of Zion communities built in preparation for the Millennium. The New Jerusalem will be called "an 'holy city' … because it is a place of righteousness" (*History of the Church,* 2:254), and it will be located at Independence, Jackson County, Missouri (see D&C 45:66–67; 57:1–3). The New Jerusalem is spoken of as "the center place" (D&C 57:3), or the administrative center, or capital, for all Zion (see Dyer, *Refiner's Fire,* pp. 99–104; *History of the Church,* 5:212). It is also spoken of as "Mount Zion" (D&C 84:2) and the "mountain of the Lord" (*History of the Church,* 6:319). ). From the beginnings laid in the New Jerusalem, the establishment of Zion communities will go forth throughout the world. The stakes of Zion will be the means through which the Zion societies will be prepared and strengthened (see D&C 82:14, 101:21, 133:9). Zion will first grow to include all of North and South America (see *History of the Church,* 6:318–319, 321) and eventually the entire earth (see Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses,* 9:138)
>
> In his vision of the future, Enoch saw that great tribulations would make necessary a means of preserving the Lord's people upon the earth

> in the last days. That means is to gather the elect in Zion (see Moses 7:61–62). The Doctrine and Covenants declares that in addition to the true "center place," the stakes of Zion would also be "for a defense, and for a refuge from the storm, and from wrath when it shall be poured out without mixture upon the whole earth" (D&C 115:6). The **Prophet Joseph Smith** taught the same principle when he said that "without Zion, and a place of deliverance, we must fall; because the time is near when the sun will be darkened, and the moon turn to blood, and the stars fall from heaven, and the earth reel to and fro. Then, if this is the case, and if we are not sanctified and gathered to the places God has appointed, with all our former professions and our great love for the Bible, we must fall; we cannot stand; we cannot be saved; for God will gather out His Saints from the Gentiles, and then comes desolation and destruction, and none can escape except the pure in heart who are gathered." (*History of the Church,* 2:52.)
>
> On another occasion, the **Prophet** gave the following admonition:
>
> "We ought to have the building up of Zion as our greatest object. When wars come, we shall have to flee to Zion. The cry is to make haste. The last revelation says, Ye shall not have time to have gone over the earth, until these things come. ...
>
> "... The time is soon coming when no man will have any peace but in Zion and her stakes.
>
> "I saw men hunting the lives of their own sons, and brother murdering brother, women killing their own daughters, and daughters seeking the lives of their mothers. I saw armies arrayed against armies. I saw blood, desolation, fires. The Son of Man has said that the mother shall be against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother. These things are at our doors. They will follow the Saints of God from city to city. Satan will rage, and the spirit of the devil is now enraged. I know not how soon these things will take place; but with a view of them, shall I cry peace? No! I will lift up my voice and testify of them. How long you will have good crops, and the famine be kept off, I do not know; when the fig tree leaves, know then that summer is nigh at hand." (*History of the Church,* 3:390–91.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 371)

"The Tower" is the center stake of Zion, the New Jerusalem in Jackson County Missouri. If we had built it, we would have stood independent of all creatures under heaven and the damage would not have been. The very first thing the Lord does when this breaking point is reached (according to the Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees) is:

1. Redeem Zion, and
2. Gather His people in and unto the New Jerusalem

I.e., "finish the tower"...

## Cup of Iniquity Full

Can we narrow down the damage to the olive trees and pinpoint this event? We have already covered what the **Family Proclamation** stated, which is key:

> Further, we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets.
>
> ("The Family: A Proclamation to the World," September 1995)

The following quotes, in addition to that quote from the Family Proclamation, round out our understanding.

**Hugh Nibley**

> There comes a time when the general defilement of a society becomes so great that the rising generation is put under undue pressure and cannot be said to have a fair choice between the way of light and the way of darkness. When such a point is reached the cup of iniquity is full, and the established order that has passed the point of no return and neither can nor will change its ways must be removed physically and forcibly if necessary from the earth, whether by war, plague, famine, or upheavals of nature (Mormon 2:13–15).
>
> (*Collected Works of Hugh Nibley,* Vol. 6, Part. 5, Ch. 11, p. 140)

**Elder Ezra Taft Benson**

> We must love our young people, whether they are in righteousness or in error. In this way we can give them a chance to discern and to learn. But we must also give them a fair choice. Today many are not succeeding.
>
> Yes, "There comes a time when the general defilement of a society becomes so great that the rising generation is put under undue pressure and cannot be said to have a fair choice between the Way of Light and the Way of Darkness."
>
> ("Satan's Thrust—Youth," *Ensign,* December 1971)

And what about the "servants fleeing"?

**President Brigham Young**

> And when the spirit of persecution, the spirit of hatred, of wrath, and malice ceases in the world against this people, it will be the time that this people have apostatized and joined hands with the wicked...
>
> (*Discourses of Brigham Young,* p. 112)

## Brigham Young: A Second Witness

Brigham Young brings into clear view what the tower was that would have allowed us to stand independent above all nations.

**Brigham Young**

> Some may ask why we did not tarry at the Center Stake of Zion, when the Lord planted our feet there? We had eyes, but we did not see; we had ears, but we did not hear; we had hearts that were devoid of what the Lord required of his people; consequently we could not abide what the Lord revealed to us. We had to go from there to gain an experience. Can you understand this? I think there are some here who can. ***If we could have received the words of life and lived according to them,*** when we were first gathered to the Center Stake of Zion, we never would have been removed from that place. ***But we did not abide the law the Lord gave to us.*** We are here to gain an experience, and we cannot increase in that any faster than our capacities will admit. Our capacities are limited, though sometimes we could receive more than we do, but we will not. Preach the riches of eternal life to a congregation, and when the eyes and affections of that congregation are like the fool's eyes, to the ends of the earth, it is like throwing pearls before swine. If I can actually reach your understandings, you will know just what I know, and see just what I see in regard to what I may say.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 10, Discourse 56, p. 290, May 15, 1864)

**Brigham Young**

> This is the land of Zion; but we are not yet prepared to go and establish the Center Stake of Zion. The Lord tried this in the first place. He called the people together to the place where the New Jerusalem and the great temple will be built, and where He will prepare for the City of Enoch. And He gave revelation after revelation; but the people could not abide them, and the Church was scattered and peeled, and the people hunted from place to place till, finally, they were driven into the mountains, and here we are. Now, it is for you and me to prepare to return back again; not to our fatherland, in many cases, but to return east, and by-and-by to build up the Center Stake of Zion. We are not prepared to do this now, but we are here to learn until we are of one heart and of one mind in the things of this life. Do all the Latter-day Saints arrive at this?

> No; they have not, our former experience has proved this. Of the great many who have been baptized into this Church, but few have been able to abide the word of the Lord; they have fallen out on the right and on the left, and have foundered by the way, and a few have gathered together. Will these be prepared to enter the celestial kingdom? Some of them will be, and will become kings and priests; but not all of these, only a portion of them. They do not know what to do with the revelations, commandments, and blessings of God. Talking, for instance, about everyday things, how many do we see here that know what to do with money and property when they get it? Are their eyes single to the building up of the kingdom of God? No; they are single to the building up of themselves. With all the knowledge that Elders have obtained who have traveled in the Church five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, or thirty years, there are few who understand the principles of the kingdom and whose eyes are single to the building of it up in all respects; but their eyes are like the fool's eye—looking to the ends of the earth. They want this and that, and they do not know what to do; they lack wisdom. ***By-and-by, perhaps, their wealth will depart from them, and when left poor and penniless, they will humble themselves before the Lord that they may be saved.***
>
> This is the situation of the Latter-day Saints, yet they are increasing. It is astonishing to look back and see the ignorance that was manifested by the people in their first gathering together; their experience then was far less than their experience and doings now. Still we are far short of being what we should and must be.
>
> When the people assemble together they should be instructed with regard to their temporal lives. It is good to assemble together and pray, and preach, and exhort, so that we may obtain the power of God to that degree that we can heal the sick, cast out devils, speak with tongues, prophecy and enjoy all the blessings and gifts of the holy gospel; but that does not raise our bread, nor perfect the Saints in wisdom. I referred here, last Sunday, to men out of the Church who possess great gifts and who are not in the Church. Men who know nothing of the Priesthood receive revelation and prophecy, and yet these gifts belong to the Church, and those who are faithful in the kingdom of God inherit them and are entitled to them; and all ought to live so as to enjoy the spirit of these gifts and callings continually.
>
> Do we know and understand that it is our business to build up Zion? To have seen the way this people have conducted themselves in years past, one would not have had the least idea that such was our business; but it made no difference whom we built cities for; many would build for Jew or Gentile, Greek, Mahommedan, or Pagan, every class of men on the earth, as readily, apparently, as they would build up Zion. Yet the word of the Lord to us is to build up Zion and her cities and stakes. Lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes, O ye House of Israel; add to her beauty and add to her strength! Why, to have seen the conduct of the people you might have supposed they knew no more about Zion than about a city of the Chinese, or a city in France, Italy, Germany, or Asia; just as soon build up a city in Asia or Africa as anywhere else, "no matter whom we build for if we only get the dollar, only get our pay for our work." Yet the commandment of God to us is to build up Zion and her cities. I told you here last Sunday what Joseph said in this respect—what we should build and what we should not build up. This book [the book of Doctrine and Covenants] is full of it.
>
> We say we believe Joseph was a prophet, that he had the priesthood and was called of God to gather the people together and establish Zion. If we believe this, why not let our lives prove that we believe the doctrine that we profess? Can you see any of the Christians in the world who do not believe the doctrine they profess? It is a very dark picture to look upon—a sad affair that we disbelieve our own doctrines. Let us remember them and live accordingly.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 11, Discourse 47, p. 324, February 10, 1867)

## Conclusion

It *is* a sad state where the Saints know more about the Palmyra temple dedication than they do about the New Jerusalem. It is a sad state that we could not come to our God and knit our hearts together in unity and build Zion. Zion was the tower and Zion cannot be built up save it be on celestial law. Members of the Church, not only are not espousing Zion and her law, they are actively supporting Satan and his laws of tolerance, inclusivity, etc. It *is* a sad state that members find themselves in, when they not only didn't make themselves a Zion people, willing and able to live celestial law, they now find themselves "agnostic" towards it—i.e., "slothful and wicked."

The Redemption of Zion is coming. Those who have oil in their lamps will join the procession. The rest will panic or continue to say "all is well in Zion." Saints of God, buckle in, strap down, don't stop preparing and when you are in the thick of it, remember, Joseph Smith is coming back for those who remain faithful during this time. The prepared shall not fear; those who are not prepared, those who did not do what was asked of them, those who did not do all that they could do (and easily so, it wasn't difficult) will have their knees buckle in fear as they tremble. When the manna and saving doesn't come raining down from heaven, they will find themselves fulfilling yet another prophecy, "I command and men obey not; I revoke and they receive not the blessing. Then they say in their hearts: This is not the work of the Lord, for his promises are not fulfilled. But wo unto such, for their reward lurketh beneath, and not from above" (D&C 58:32–33), "for of him unto whom much is given much is required; and he who sins against the greater light shall receive the greater condemnation. Ye call upon my name for revelations, and I give them unto you; and inasmuch as ye keep not my sayings, which I give unto you, ye become transgressors; and justice and judgment are the penalty which is affixed unto my law. … I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise" (D&C 82:3–4, 10).

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> As I have stated before, the gathering of Israel is the *most* important work taking place on earth today. One crucial element of this gathering is preparing a people who are able, ready, and worthy to receive the Lord when He comes again, a people who have already chosen Jesus Christ over this fallen world, a people who rejoice in their agency to live the higher, holier laws of Jesus Christ. I call upon you, my dear brothers and sisters, to become this righteous people.
>
> ("Overcome the World and Find Rest," General Conference, October 2022)

**President Benson** made it very clear to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1989:

> My dear brethren and sisters, we must prepare to redeem Zion. ("Beware of Pride," General Conference, April 1989)

Finish. The. Tower.

# The Gathering; The Separation

## All Is Well in Zion!

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> Because of Jesus Christ's infinite Atonement, our Heavenly Father's plan is a perfect plan! An understanding of God's fabulous plan takes the mystery out of life and the uncertainty out of our future. It allows each of us to choose *how* we will live here on earth and *where* we will live forever. The baseless notion that we should "eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die; and it shall be well with us" is one of the most absurd lies in the universe.
>
> ("Think Celestial!" General Conference, October 2023)

**President Ezra Taft Benson**

> The Book of Mormon warns us of the tactics of the adversary in the last day: "And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell." (2 Nephi 28:21.)
>
> There are many "awake" passages in the Book of Mormon, such as: "O that ye would awake; awake from a deep sleep, yea, even from the sleep of hell … awake … [and] put on the armor of righteousness. Shake off the chains with which ye are bound, and come forth out of obscurity, and arise from the dust." (2 Nephi 1:13, 23.) As a people, it seems we can survive persecution easier and better than we can peace and prosperity…
>
> Watchmen—what of the night? We must respond by saying that all is not well in Zion. As Moroni counseled, we must cleanse the inner vessel (see Alma 60:23), beginning first with ourselves, then with our families, and finally with the Church.
>
> A prophet of God stated, "Ye shall clear away the bad according as the good shall grow … until the good shall overcome the bad." (Jacob 5:66.) It takes a Zion people to make a Zion society, and we must prepare for that.
>
> ("A Witness and a Warning: A Modern Day Prophet Testifies of the Book of Mormon," *Ensign,* May 1986, pp. 5, 78)

**2 Nephi 28**

> **5** And they deny the power of God, the Holy One of Israel; and they say unto the people: Hearken unto us, and hear ye our precept; for behold there is no God today, for the Lord and the Redeemer hath done his work, and he hath given his power unto men;
>
> **6** Behold, hearken ye unto my precept; if they shall say there is a miracle wrought by the hand of the Lord, believe it not; for this day he is not a God of miracles; he hath done his work.
>
> **7** Yea, and there shall be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die; and it shall be well with us.
>
> **8** And there shall also be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry; nevertheless, fear God—he will justify in committing a little sin; yea, lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this; and do all these things, for tomorrow we die; and if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God.
>
> **9** Yea, and there shall be many which shall teach after this manner, false and vain and foolish doctrines, and shall be puffed up in their hearts, and shall seek deep to hide their counsels from the Lord; and their works shall be in the dark.
>
> **10** And the blood of the saints shall cry from the ground against them.
>
> **11** Yea, they have all gone out of the way; they have become corrupted.
>
> **12** Because of pride, and because of false teachers, and false doctrine, their churches have become corrupted, and their churches are lifted up; because of pride they are puffed up.
>
> **13** They rob the poor because of their fine sanctuaries; they rob the poor because of their fine clothing; and they persecute the meek and the poor in heart, because in their pride they are puffed up.
>
> **14** They wear stiff necks and high heads; yea, and because of pride, and wickedness, and abominations, and whoredoms, they have all gone astray save it be a few, who are the humble followers of Christ; nevertheless, they are led, that in many instances they do err because they are taught by the precepts of men.

**Mormon 8**

> **35** Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing.
>
> **36** And I know that ye do walk in the pride of your hearts; and there are none save a few only who do not lift themselves up in the pride of their hearts, unto the wearing of very fine apparel, unto envying, and strifes, and malice, and persecutions, and all manner of iniquities; and your churches, yea, even every one, have become polluted because of the pride of your hearts.
>
> **37** For behold, ye do love money, and your substance, and your fine apparel, and the adorning of your churches, more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted.
>
> **38** O ye pollutions, ye hypocrites, ye teachers, who sell yourselves for that which will canker, why have ye polluted the holy church of God? Why are ye ashamed to take upon you the name of Christ? Why do ye not think that greater is the value of an endless happiness than that misery which never dies—because of the praise of the world?
>
> **39** Why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not?
>
> **40** Yea, why do ye build up your secret abominations to get gain, and cause that widows should mourn before the Lord, and also orphans to mourn before the Lord, and also the blood of their fathers and their husbands to cry unto the Lord from the ground, for vengeance upon your heads?
>
> **41** Behold, the sword of vengeance hangeth over you; and the time soon cometh that he avengeth the blood of the saints upon you, for he will not suffer their cries any longer.

Why is the blood of the Saints crying from the ground against us…? What has been the history of The Church of Jesus Christ (in this dispensation or others) with regard to persecution, murder, plunder, etc.? Is the Lord the same yesterday, today, and forever or will the Lord treat the Saints (or those calling themselves "saints") of today differently than He treated the Saints in every other dispensation and time…?

"We have too much real estate for the Lord to simply tell us to abandon!"

"Why would the Lord ever tell us to do that?!"

"When has the Lord ever asked his people to do such a thing, let alone in this dispensation?!"

"The Lord would never allow one of his temples to be destroyed! That has never happened, let alone in this dispensation!"

"The Lord is calling people to serve missions so clearly nothing bad could happen and the Second Coming isn't something I need to worry about! It's not like Apostles were serving missions when Joseph Smith Jr was killed! That would never happen…"

"There are, like, 3–6 million members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who are actually active and pay tithing, there is no way the Lord could possibly fit that many people into such a small geographical area!"

"There's no way that 9.5+ million people could live in a tiny area surrounding Jerusalem in Palestine… Come on man!" Etc. Etc. Etc.

BURNING OF MORMON TEMPLE AT NAUVOO.

All variations of the same lie—"All is well in Zion, yea, Zion prospers!"

## The First Gathering (Spiritual)

**D&C 110:11. The Keys of Gathering Are Crucial to the Earthly Kingdom of God**

> The **Prophet Joseph Smith** spoke of the importance of the gathering: "All that the prophets … have written, from the days of righteous Abel, down to the last man that has left any testimony on record for our consideration, in speaking of the salvation of Israel in the last days, goes directly to show that it consists in the work of the gathering" (Smith, *Teachings,* p. 83).
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 275)

**D&C 133:11. When Will Christ Come to Usher in His Millennial Reign?**

> **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** wrote:
>
> "Question: Does or will anyone know when the Lord will come? Answer: As to the day and hour, No; as to the generation, Yes.
>
> "Question: Who shall know the generation? Answer: The saints, the children of light, those who can read the signs of the times, those who treasure up the Lord's word so they will not be deceived.
>
> "Paul told the Thessalonians that 'the coming of the Lord' would be 'as travail upon a woman with child'; that where people of the world are concerned Jesus would come 'as a thief in the night,' that is unexpectedly and without warning; but that where 'the children of light' are concerned, the Lord would not come as 'a thief in the night,' for they are aware of the 'times and seasons' connected with his return. (1 Thess. 4:13–18; 5:1–7.) Thus, though the saints do not know the day, they are aware of the season. As a woman in travail feels the pains of the approaching birth, so the saints read the signs of the times; neither knows the exact moment of the anticipated happening, but both know the approximate time." (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 1:665–66; see also Matthew 24:36, 42; D&C 45:39; 49:7; 77:6, 12; 130:14–17.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 338)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> You were sent to earth at this precise time … to help gather Israel. There is *nothing* happening on this earth right now that is more important than that [gathering]. … This gathering should mean *everything* to you.
>
> ("Hope of Israel," Worldwide devotional for youth, June 3, 2018)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> As I have stated before, the gathering of Israel is the most important work taking place on earth today. ***One crucial element of this gathering is preparing a people who are able, ready, and worthy to receive the Lord when He comes again, a people who have already chosen Jesus Christ over this fallen world, a people who rejoice in their agency to live the higher, holier laws of Jesus Christ.***
>
> I call upon you, my dear brothers and sisters, ***to become this righteous people.***
>
> ("Overcome the World and Find Rest," General Conference, October 2022)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> *Anytime* you do *anything* that helps *anyone*—on either side of the veil—take a step toward making covenants with God and receiving their essential baptismal and temple ordinances, you are helping to gather Israel.
>
> ("Hope of Israel," Worldwide devotional for youth, June 3, 2018)

**D&C 24:19. Pruning the Vineyard**

> "In this dispensation the Lord's vineyard covers the whole earth, and the laborers are going forth to gather scattered ***Israel before the appointed day of burning when the vineyard will be purified of corruption.*** (D. & C. 33:2–7; 72:2; 75:2–5; 101:44–62; 135:6.)" (McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine,* p. 452.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 50)

**Doctrine and Covenants 29**

> **7** And ye are called to bring to pass the gathering of mine elect; for mine elect hear my voice and harden not their hearts;
>
> **8** Wherefore the decree hath gone forth from the Father that they shall be ***gathered in unto one place upon the face of this land,*** to prepare their hearts and be prepared in all things against the day when tribulation and desolation are sent forth upon the wicked.

**D&C 29:7. Who Are the "Elect"?**

> "The *elect of God* comprise a very select group, an inner circle of faithful members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They are the portion of church members who are striving with all their hearts to keep the fulness of the gospel law ***in this life*** so that they can become inheritors of the fulness of gospel rewards ***in the life to come."*** (McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine,* p. 217.)
>
> **Elder George Q. Cannon** explained: "Where people are pure and chaste in their thoughts and actions, the Spirit of God has such power with them that they readily perceive and comprehend the truth. ***It is by this means that the best among the children of God are being gathered out from the various nations.*** Truth cleaves to truth, light to light and purity to purity. The gospel gathers with its influence those who love its principles; and if any should be gathered in who cannot abide its requirements, they pass off and mingle with the elements that are congenial to the spirit they possess." ("The Sin of Adultery and Its Consequences," *Millennial Star,* 14 Mar. 1863, p. 169.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 60)

**D&C 31:8. "Strengthen Them … Against the Time When They Shall Be Gathered"**

> "The principle of gathering had just been revealed (Sec. 29:2–8). Marsh was to be one of the servants of the Almighty whose duty it would be to strengthen and prepare the people for gathering. It takes both strength of character and preparation to gather to Zion, and this will be still more the case, when the City of Zion is to be built up, and the laws of

God must be observed. Marsh, in the autumn of 1832, led a company of Saints to Jackson Co., Mo." (Smith and Sjodahl, Commentary, p. 166.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 65)

**Matthew 13**

**47** ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

**48** Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

"Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind, which when it was full they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." For the work of this pattern, behold the seed of Joseph, spreading forth the Gospel net upon the face of the earth, gathering of every kind, that the good may be saved in vessels prepared for that purpose, and the angels will take care of the bad.[6]

**Footnotes**

6. Matt. 13:49–50

("The Net Cast in the Sea," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 102)

**Jeremiah 16**

**16** ¶ Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them...

## The Gathering (Physical)

**Matthew 13**

**49** So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

**50** And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

So shall it be at the end of the world—***the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire, and there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.***

("The Net Cast in the Sea," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 102)

**1 Nephi 14**

**7** For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work ***a great and a marvelous work*** among the children of men; a work which shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or on the other—either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds unto their being brought down into captivity, and also into destruction, ***both temporally and spiritually,*** according to the captivity of the devil, of which I have spoken.

**Jeremiah 16**

**16** ... and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

The gathering of Israel and the establishment of Zion in the latter days is divided into three periods or phases. The first phase is past; we are now living in the second phase; and the third lies ahead. Prophecies speak of them all. If we do not rightly divide the word of God [see 2 Tim. 2:15] as Paul's expression is, we will face confusion and uncertainty. If on the other hand we correctly envision our proper role and know what should be done today, we shall then be able to use our time, talents, and means to the best advantage in building up the kingdom ***and preparing a people for the second coming of the Son of Man.***

The three phases of this great latter-day work are as follows:

Phase I—From the First Vision, the setting up of the kingdom on April 6, 1830, and the coming of Moses on April 3, 1836, to the secure establishment of the Church in the United States and Canada, a period of about 125 years.

Phase II—From the creation of stakes of [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] in overseas areas, beginning in the 1950s, to the second coming of the Son of Man, ***a period of unknown duration.***

Phase III—***From our Lord's second coming until the kingdom is perfected*** and the knowledge of God covers the earth as the waters cover the sea [see Isa. 11:9] and from then until the end of the Millennium, a period of 1,000 years.

We live in the age of restoration. Peter calls it "the times of restitution," [see Acts 3:21] meaning the period or time in the earth's history when that which once was shall be restored in all its original glory and perfection. He says the things to be restored include "all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3:21 ***And there are few things of which Israel's prophets have spoken with more fervor and zeal than the latter-day gathering of the house of Jacob and the part that favored people will play in the building of Zion again on earth.***

("Come: Let Israel Build Zion," *Ensign,* May 1977, p. 117)

**2 Nephi 21**

**9** They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

**10** And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious.

**11** And it shall come to pass ***in that day that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left,*** from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

**12** And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

**13** The envy of Ephraim also shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.

**14** But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines towards the west; they shall spoil them of the east together; they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.

**15** And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind he shall shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dry shod.

**16** And there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria, like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

**2 Nephi 25**

**17** And the Lord will set his hand again the second time to restore his people from their lost and fallen state. Wherefore, he will proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder among the children of men.

**President Russell M. Nelson**

Now, how does the Lord feel about people who will let God prevail? Nephi summed it up well: "[The Lord] loveth those who will have him to be their God. Behold, he loved our fathers, and he covenanted with

them, yea, even Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and he remember[s] the covenants which he [has] made."

And what is the Lord willing to do for Israel? The Lord has pledged that He will "fight [our] battles, and [our] children's battles, and our children's children's [battles] … to the third and fourth generation"!

As you study your scriptures during the next six months, I encourage you to make a list of all that the Lord has promised He will do for covenant Israel. I think you will be astounded! Ponder these promises. Talk about them with your family and friends. ***Then live and watch for these promises to be fulfilled in your own life.***

My dear brothers and sisters, as you choose to let God prevail in your lives, you will experience for yourselves that our God is "a God of miracles." As a people, we are His covenant children, and we will be called by His name. Of this I testify in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

("Let God Prevail," General Conference, October 2020)

**2 Nephi 29**

**12** But behold, there shall be many—at that day when I shall proceed to do a marvelous work among them, that I may remember my covenants which I have made unto the children of men, that I may set my hand again the second time to recover my people, which are of the house of Israel…

**13** And it shall come to pass that the Jews shall have the words of the Nephites, and the Nephites shall have the words of the Jews; and the Nephites and the Jews shall have the words of the lost tribes of Israel; and the lost tribes of Israel shall have the words of the Nephites and the Jews.

**14** And it shall come to pass that my people, which are of the house of Israel, ***shall be gathered home unto the lands of their possessions;*** and my word also shall be gathered in one. And I will show unto them that fight against my word and against my people, who are of the house of Israel, that I am God, and that I covenanted with Abraham that I would remember his seed forever.

**1 Nephi 22**

**2** And I, Nephi, said unto them: Behold they were manifest unto the prophet by the voice of the Spirit; for by the Spirit are all things made known unto the prophets, which shall come upon the children of men according to the flesh.

**3** Wherefore, the things of which I have read are things pertaining to things ***both temporal and spiritual;*** for it appears that the house of Israel, sooner or later, will be scattered upon all the face of the earth, and also among all nations.

**4** And behold, there are many who are already lost from the knowledge of those who are at Jerusalem. Yea, the more part of all the tribes have been led away; and they are scattered to and fro upon the isles of the sea; and whither they are none of us knoweth, save that we know that they have been led away.

**5** And since they have been led away, these things have been prophesied concerning them, and also concerning all those who shall hereafter be scattered and be confounded, because of the Holy One of Israel; for against him will they harden their hearts; wherefore, they shall be scattered among all nations and shall be hated of all men.

**6** Nevertheless, after they shall be nursed by the Gentiles, and the Lord has lifted up his hand upon the Gentiles and set them up for a standard, and their children have been carried in their arms, and their daughters have been carried upon their shoulders, behold these things of which are spoken ***are temporal; for thus are the covenants of the Lord with our fathers;*** and it meaneth us in the days to come, and also all our brethren who are of the house of Israel.

**7** And it meaneth that the time cometh that after all the house of Israel have been scattered and confounded, that the Lord God will raise up a mighty nation among the Gentiles, yea, even upon the face of this land; and by them shall our seed be scattered.

**8** And after our seed is scattered ***the Lord God will proceed to do a marvelous work among the Gentiles,*** which shall be of great worth unto our seed; wherefore, it is likened unto their being nourished by the Gentiles and being carried in their arms and upon their shoulders.

**9** And it shall also be of worth unto the Gentiles; and not only unto the Gentiles but unto all the house of Israel, unto the making known of the covenants of the Father of heaven unto Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

**10** And I would, my brethren, ***that ye should know that all the kindreds of the earth cannot be blessed unless he shall make bare his arm in the eyes of the nations.***

**11** ***Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to make bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations, in bringing about his covenants and his gospel unto those who are of the house of Israel.***

**12** Wherefore, he will bring them again out of captivity, ***and they shall be gathered together to the lands of their inheritance;*** and they shall be brought out of obscurity and out of darkness; and they shall know that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer, the Mighty One of Israel.

**13** And the blood of that great and abominable church, which is the whore of all the earth, shall turn upon their own heads; for they shall war among themselves, and the sword of their own hands shall fall upon their own heads, and they shall be drunken with their own blood.

**14** And every nation which shall war against thee, O house of Israel, shall be turned one against another, and they shall fall into the pit which they digged to ensnare the people of the Lord. And all that fight against Zion shall be destroyed, and that great whore, who hath perverted the right ways of the Lord, yea, that great and abominable church, shall tumble to the dust and great shall be the fall of it.

**15** For behold, saith the prophet, the time cometh speedily that Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men; for the day soon cometh that all the proud and they who do wickedly shall be as stubble; and the day cometh that they must be burned.

**16** For the time soon cometh that the fulness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all the children of men; for he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous.

**17** Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, ***even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire.***

**18** Behold, my brethren, I say unto you, that these things must shortly come; ***yea, even blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke must come;*** and it must needs be upon the face of this earth; and it cometh unto men according to the flesh if it so be that they will harden their hearts against the Holy One of Israel.

**19** For behold, the righteous shall not perish; ***for the time surely must come that all they who fight against Zion shall be cut off.***

**20** And the Lord will surely prepare a way for his people, unto the fulfilling of the words of Moses, which he spake, saying: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. ***And it shall come to pass that all those who will not hear that prophet shall be cut off from among the people.***

**21** And now I, Nephi, declare unto you, that this prophet of whom Moses spake was the Holy One of Israel; wherefore, he shall execute judgment in righteousness.

**22** And the righteous need not fear, for they are those who shall not be confounded. But it is the kingdom of the devil, which shall be built up among the children of men, which kingdom is established among them which are in the flesh—

**23** For the time speedily shall come that ***all churches which are built up to get gain,*** and all those who are built up to get power over the flesh, and those who are built up to become popular in the eyes of the world, and those who seek the lusts of the flesh and the things of the world, and to do all manner of iniquity; yea, in fine, all those who belong to the kingdom of the devil are they who need fear, and tremble, and quake; they are those who must be brought low in the dust; they are those who must be consumed as stubble; and this is according to the words of the prophet.

**24** ***And the time cometh speedily that the righteous must be led up as calves of the stall, and the Holy One of Israel must reign in dominion, and might, and power, and great glory.***

**25** ***And he gathereth his children from the four quarters of the earth; and he numbereth his sheep, and they know him; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd; and he shall feed his sheep, and in him they shall find pasture.***

**26** And because of the righteousness of his people, Satan has no power; wherefore, he cannot be loosed for the space of many years; for he hath no power over the hearts of the people, for they dwell in righteousness, and the Holy One of Israel reigneth.

**27** And now behold, I, Nephi, ***say unto you that all these things must come according to the flesh.***

**28** But, behold, all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people shall dwell safely in the Holy One of Israel if it so be that they will repent.

**29** And now I, Nephi, make an end; for I durst not speak further as yet concerning these things.

**30** Wherefore, my brethren, ***I would that ye should consider that the things which have been written upon the plates of brass are true;*** and they testify that a man must be obedient to the commandments of God.

**D&C 133:13. What Does the Phrase "Mountains of the Lord's House" Mean?**

With reference to a similar statement in Micah 4:1, **President Harold B. Lee** explained: "The expression 'the mountain of the Lord's house,' as here indicated, was undoubtedly to be referred to as a place as well as a definition of a righteous people" ("The Way to Eternal Life," *Ensign,* Nov. 1971, p. 15). ...

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** explained that the phrase has more than one meaning:

"The *mountain of the Lord's house* is the mountain where the temple of God is built. [Isaiah 2:2–3 quoted; see also Micah 4:1–2; 2 Nephi 12:2–3.]

"This great prophecy, as is often the case, is subject to the law of multiple fulfilment. 1. In Salt Lake City and other mountain locations temples, in the full and true sense of the word, have been erected, and representatives of all nations are flowing unto them to learn of God and his ways. ... 2. But the day is yet future when the Lord's house is to be built on that 'Mount Zion' which is 'the city of New Jerusalem' in Jackson County, Missouri. (D. & C. 84:2–4.) Mount Zion, itself, will be the mountain of the Lord's house in the day when that glorious temple is erected. 3. When the Jews flee unto Jerusalem, it will be 'unto the mountains of the Lord's house' (D. & C. 133:13), for a holy temple is to be built there also as part of the work of the great era of restoration. (Ezek. 37:24–28.)

"The law cannot go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, in the full millennial sense that Isaiah foresaw and specified, until these two great future temples are constructed in the old and new Jerusalems." (*Mormon Doctrine,* pp. 517–18.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 339)

**D&C 133:12–13. Zion and Jerusalem As Places of Gathering**

"The Gentiles who obeyed the Gospel were commanded (v. 12) to gather in Zion, and those of the house of Judah were to flee to Jerusalem (v. 13). This is in harmony with the prediction of Isaiah and Micah, that out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. For from both these centers the Lord shall judge. Jerusalem shall be rebuilt and become a holy city, the capital for Judah, and Zion shall be the capital and city of our God, for Ephraim and his fellows. Both shall be seats of government in unison with each other, and the Lord shall dwell in both." (Smith and Sjodahl, Commentary, p. 841.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 339)

**Doctrine and Covenants 84**

**4** Verily this is the word of the Lord, that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation.

**D&C 84:4. "New Jerusalem Shall Be Built by the Gathering of the Saints"**

Zion is the opposite of the world, or spiritual Babylon. In preparation for the Millennium, therefore, Babylon must be destroyed. The cry to all people is, "Go ye out from among the nations, even from Babylon, from the midst of wickedness, which is ... Babylon. ... and he that goeth, let him not look back lest sudden destruction shall come upon him." (D&C 133:14–15.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 181)

**D&C 84:4. Which Temple Is Referred to Here?**

The Lord was speaking of the temple in Zion, that is, Jackson County, Missouri. The Lord later excused the Saints from building that temple because the mobs prevented it (see D&C 124:49–51) and because the Saints at that time had not kept the commandments as they should (see D&C 105:1–9).

The day will come, however, when the holy city of God will be established in Jackson County, Missouri, and the temple will be filled with the glory of God as foreseen by the prophets (see 3 Nephi 20:22; 21:23–25; Ether 13:3–4, 6–8).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 181)

**Doctrine and Covenants 113**

**7** Questions by Elias Higbee: What is meant by the command in Isaiah, 52d chapter, 1st verse, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion—and what people had Isaiah reference to?

**8** He had reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of priesthood to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel; and to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage; also to return to that power which she had lost.

**9** What are we to understand by Zion loosing herself from the bands of her neck; 2d verse?

**10** We are to understand that the scattered remnants are exhorted to return to the Lord from whence they have fallen; which if they do, the promise of the Lord is that he will speak to them, or give them revelation. The bands of her neck are the curses of God upon her, or the remnants of Israel in their scattered condition among the Gentiles.

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**10** I have sworn, and the decree hath gone forth by a former commandment which I have given unto you, that I would let fall the sword of mine indignation in behalf of my people; and even as I have said, it shall come to pass.

**11** Mine indignation is soon to be poured out without measure upon all nations; and this will I do when the cup of their iniquity is full.

**12** And in that day ***all who are found upon the watch-tower, or in other words, all mine Israel,*** shall be saved.

**13** And they that have been scattered shall be gathered.

**14** And all they who have mourned shall be comforted.

**15** And all they who have given their lives for my name shall be crowned.

**16** Therefore, let your hearts be comforted concerning Zion; for all flesh is in mine hands; be still and know that I am God.

**17** Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered.

**18** They that remain, and are pure in heart, shall return, ***and come to their inheritances,*** they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy, ***to build up the waste places of Zion***—

**19** ***And all these things that the prophets might be fulfilled.***

**20** And, behold, ***there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed*** than that which I have appointed, for the work of the gathering of my saints—

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

But to illustrate more clearly this gathering: We have another parable—"Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure hid in a field, the which, when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof, goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field!" The Saints work after this pattern. See the Church of the Latter-day Saints, selling all that they have, and gathering themselves together unto a place that they may purchase for an inheritance, that they may be together and bear each other's afflictions in the day of calamity.

Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." The Saints again work after this example. See men traveling to find places for Zion and her stakes or remnants, who, when they find the place for Zion, or the pearl of great price, straightway sell that they have, and buy it.

("The Treasure Hid in a Field," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 101–102)

## The Separation

**President Russell M. Nelson**

The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do (see Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7). ("The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior's Second Coming," *Ensign,* April 2020)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

Now, as President of His Church, I plead with you … Do the spiritual work to find out for yourselves [that the Savior's Church has been restored], and please do it now. Time is running out.

("Come, Follow Me," General Conference, April 2019)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

We live in the day that "our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation." We have front-row seats to witness live what the prophet Nephi saw only in vision, that "the power of the Lamb of God" would descend "upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory."

You, my brothers and sisters, are among those men, women, and children whom Nephi saw. Think of that!

Regardless of where you live or what your circumstances are, the Lord Jesus Christ is your Savior, and God's prophet Joseph Smith is your prophet. He was foreordained before the foundation of the earth to be the prophet of this last dispensation, when "nothing shall be withheld" from the Saints. Revelation continues to flow from the Lord during this ongoing process of restoration.

("Hear Him," General Conference, April 2020)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

With the Hebraic definition of *Israel* in mind, we find that the gathering of Israel takes on added meaning. The Lord is gathering those who are willing to let God prevail in their lives. The Lord is gathering those who will choose to let God be the most important influence in their lives. …

Are *you* willing to let God prevail in your life? Are *you* willing to let God be the most important influence in your life? Will you allow His words, His commandments, and His covenants to influence what you do each day? Will you allow His voice to take priority over any other? Are you *willing* to let whatever He needs you to do take precedence over every other ambition? Are you *willing* to have your will swallowed up in His? …

As you study your scriptures during the next six months, I encourage you to make a list of all that the Lord has promised He will do for covenant Israel. I think you will be astounded! Ponder these promises. Talk about them with your family and friends. ***Then live and watch for these promises to be fulfilled in your own life.***

("Let God Prevail," General Conference, October 2020)

**Doctrine and Covenants 84**

**43** And I now give unto you a commandment to beware concerning yourselves, to give diligent heed to the words of eternal life.

**44** For you shall live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God. …

**46** And the Spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the world; and the Spirit enlighteneth every man through the world, that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit.

**47** And every one that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit cometh unto God, even the Father.

**48** And the Father teacheth him of the covenant which he has renewed and confirmed upon you, which is confirmed upon you for your sakes, and not for your sakes only, but for the sake of the whole world.

**49** And the whole world lieth in sin, and groaneth under darkness and under the bondage of sin.

**50** ***And by this you may know they are under the bondage of sin, because they come not unto me.***

**51** ***For whoso cometh not unto me is under the bondage of sin.***

**52** And whoso receiveth not my voice is not acquainted with my voice, and is not of me.

**53** ***And by this you may know the righteous from the wicked, and that the whole world groaneth under sin and darkness even now.***

**54** And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—

**55** Which vanity and unbelief have brought ***the whole church under condemnation.***

**56** ***And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all.***

**57** And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written—

**58** ***That they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom; otherwise there remaineth a scourge and judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion.***

**59** For shall the children of the kingdom ***pollute my holy land?*** Verily, I say unto you, Nay.

**Doctrine and Covenants 64**

**31** And behold, I, the Lord, declare unto you, and my words are sure and shall not fail, that they shall obtain it.

**32** But all things must come to pass in their time.

**33** Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great.

**34** Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; ***and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days.***

**35** ***And the rebellious shall be cut off out of the land of Zion, and shall be sent away, and shall not inherit the land.***

**36** ***For, verily I say that the rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim, wherefore they shall be plucked out.***

**37** Behold, I, the Lord, have made my church in these last days like unto a judge sitting on a hill, or in a high place, to judge the nations.

**38** For it shall come to pass ***that the inhabitants of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion.***

**39** And liars and hypocrites shall be proved by them, and they who are not apostles and prophets shall be known.

**40** And even the bishop, who is a judge, and his counselors, if they are not faithful in their stewardships ***shall be condemned, and others shall be planted in their stead.***

**41** For, behold, I say unto you that Zion shall flourish, and the glory of the Lord shall be upon her;

**42** And she shall be an ensign unto the people, and there shall come unto her out of every nation under heaven.

**43** And the day shall come when the nations of the earth shall tremble because of her, and shall fear because of her terrible ones. The Lord hath spoken it. Amen.

**Alma 5**

**57** And now I say unto you, all you that are desirous to follow the voice of the good shepherd, ***come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate,*** and touch not their unclean things; and behold, ***their names shall be blotted out, that the names of the wicked shall not be numbered among the names of the righteous, that the word of God may be fulfilled, which saith: The names of the wicked shall not be mingled with the names of my people;***

**58** For the names of the righteous shall be written in the book of life, ***and unto them will I grant an inheritance at my right hand.*** And now, my brethren, what have ye to say against this? I say unto you, if ye speak against it, i***t matters not, for the word of God must be fulfilled.***

**3 Nephi 24**

**16** Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

**17** And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

**18** ***Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.***

**1 Nephi 14**

**10** And he said unto me: Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth.

**11** And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters; and she had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people.

**12** And it came to pass that I beheld ***the church of the Lamb of God, and its numbers were few,*** because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that ***the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God,*** were also upon all the face of the earth; and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small, because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw.

**13** And it came to pass that I beheld that the great mother of abominations ***did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God.***

**14** And it came to pass that ***I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.***

**15** And it came to pass that I beheld that the wrath of God was poured out upon that great and abominable church, insomuch that there were wars and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth.

**Doctrine and Covenants 86**

**1** Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you my servants, concerning the parable of the wheat and of the tares:

**2** Behold, verily I say, the field was the world, and the apostles were the sowers of the seed;

**3** And after they have fallen asleep the great persecutor of the church, the apostate, the whore, even Babylon, that maketh all nations to drink of her cup, in whose hearts the enemy, even Satan, sitteth to reign—behold he soweth the tares; wherefore, the tares choke the wheat and drive the church into the wilderness.

**4** But behold, in the last days, even now while the Lord is beginning to bring forth the word, and the blade is springing up and is yet tender—

**5** Behold, verily I say unto you, the angels are crying unto the Lord day and night, who are ready and waiting to be sent forth to reap down the fields;

**6** But the Lord saith unto them, pluck not up the tares while the blade is yet tender (for verily your faith is weak), lest you destroy the wheat also.

**7** Therefore, let the wheat and the tares grow together until the harvest is fully ripe; ***then ye shall first gather out the wheat from among the tares, and after the gathering of the wheat, behold and lo, the tares are bound in bundles, and the field remaineth to be burned.***

**8** Therefore, thus saith the Lord unto you, with whom the priesthood hath continued through the lineage of your fathers—

**9** For ye are lawful heirs, according to the flesh, and have been hid from the world with Christ in God—

**10** Therefore your life and the priesthood have remained, and must needs remain through you and your lineage until the restoration of all things spoken by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began.

**11** Therefore, blessed are ye if ye continue in my goodness, a light unto the Gentiles, and through this priesthood, a savior unto my people Israel. The Lord hath said it. Amen.

**D&C 86:1–7. The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares**

5. The tares (see D&C 86:4) represent evil doctrines and those who spread them. "Traditionally, tares have been identified with the darnel weed, a species of bearded rye-grass which closely resembles wheat in the early growth period and which is found in modern Palestine. This weed has a bitter taste; if eaten in any apprecia-

ble amount, either separately or when mixed with bread, it causes dizziness and often acts as a violent emetic." (McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 1:296.)

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** pointed out that "even in the Church the tares are to be found. It is the tares which are to be gathered up and burned from all over the world, but those in the Church will also be gathered out and find their place in the fire. [See D&C 112:23–26.] The Savior also bore witness of [this. When] speaking to the Nephites he said: 'For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from my people, O house of Israel.' (3 Nephi 21:20.)" (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 1:354.)

False doctrines or individuals who present themselves as faithful members of the Church but are in reality servants of Satan are a source of temptation to the faithful and tend to choke or corrupt the word of God, or the good seed that is sown.

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 190)

**Doctrine and Covenants 76**

**102** Last of all, these all are they who will not be gathered with the saints…

**103** These are they who are liars, and sorcerers, and adulterers, and whoremongers, and whosoever loves and makes a lie.

**Index to the Triple Combination: Gather, Gathering**

telestial heirs ***will not be gathered with Saints,*** D&C 76:102.

angels to *gather* tares, D&C 38:12.

## The Ten Tribes and 144k

(D-5) What Became of the Tribes of Israel?

How long Israel remained in Assyria after they had been carried away captive by Sargon II is not known. It is likely that many accepted the life and culture of their captors and lost their identity. They had gone into captivity because of their extreme wickedness, so it would not be surprising to find them accepting the pagan culture of the Assyrians. One of the books of the Apocrypha, however, records that one group of the captives saw that their captivity was the result of their own wickedness and sought the Lord in repentance (see Bible Dictionary, s.v. "Apocrypha"). The Lord heeded their cries and led them away into the north countries.

In the Apocrypha, Esdras describes the following vision: "But they took this counsel among themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a further country, where never mankind dwelt, that they might there keep their statutes, which they never kept in their own land. And they entered into Euphrates by the narrow passages of the river. For the most High then shewed signs for them, and held still the flood, till they were passed over. For through that country there was a great way to go, namely, of a year and a half: and the same region is called Arsareth. Then dwelt they there until the latter time." (2 Esdras 13:41–46.)

**Elder George Reynolds** commented on the direction of the travels of the tribes of Israel: "They determined to go to a country 'where never man dwelt,' that they might be free from all contaminating influences. That country could only be found in the north. Southern Asia was already the seat of a comparatively ancient civilization; Egypt flourished in northern Africa; and southern Europe was rapidly filling with the future rulers of the world. They had therefore no choice but to turn their faces northward. The first portion of their journey was not however north; according to the account of Esdras, they appear to have at first moved in the direction of their old home; and it is possible that they originally started with the intention of returning thereto; or probably, in order to deceive the Assyrians, they started as if to return to Canaan, and when they crossed the Euphrates and were out of danger from the hosts of Medes and Persians, then they turned their journeying feet toward the polar star." (In James E. Talmage, *The Articles of Faith,* p. 512.)

[Continuing the quote: "It is altogether improbable that in that long journey of one and a half years, as Esdras states it, from Media the land of their captivity to the frozen north, some of the backsliding Israel rebelled, turned aside from the main body, forgot their God, by and by mingled with the Gentiles and became the leaven to leaven with the promised seed all the nations of the earth? The account given in the Book of Mormon of a single family of this same house, its waywardness its stiffneckedness before God, its internal quarrels and family feuds are, we fear, an example on a small scale of what most probably happened in the vast bodies of Israelites who for so many months wended their tedious way northward. Laman and Lemuel had, no doubt, many counterparts in the journeying Ten Tribes. And who so likely to rebel as stubborn, impetuous, proud and warlike Ephraim? Rebellion and backsliding have been so characteristically the story of Ephraim's career that he can scarcely conceive that it could be otherwise and yet preserve the unities of that people's history. Can it be any wonder then that so much of the blood of Ephraim has been found hidden and unknown in the midst of the nations of northern Europe and other parts until the spirit of prophecy revealed its existence?" (Reynolds, *Are We of Israel?*, Chapter One, pp. 10–11; In James E. Talmage, *The Articles of Faith,* Chapter Three).]

The account in Esdras is supported by what the Savior taught the Nephites, for He said the lost tribes had been "led away out of the land" by the Father (3 Nephi 15:15). Elder Reynolds's explanation takes into account the numerous prophecies that indicate that when the ten lost tribes return, they will come out of the north (see, for example, Jeremiah 3:18; 16:15; 31:8; D&C 110:11; 133:26). Where they went is not known, and this fact has led to much speculation about their present whereabouts. The Lord has not seen fit to reveal their location, however, and until He does so, it is useless to try to identify their present locality.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), "Enrichment D: The Assyrian Conquest and the Lost Tribes," pp. 114–115)

The scattering of Israel is not the same thing as this group. Those that broke off of the group heading north are where we get the scattering of Israel. So we have two different groups. We also are told that we do not know the location of the body and ***we will not know the location of the body until they are revealed,*** and this revealing won't take place ***until they are returning.*** Ergo, this has nothing to do with patriarchal blessings. Patriarchal blessings deal with the scattering of Israel.

**Doctrine and Covenants 110**

**11** After this vision closed, the heavens were again opened unto us; and Moses appeared before us, and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, ***and*** the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north.

**Articles of Faith**

**10** We believe in the literal gathering of Israel ***and*** in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) ***will be*** built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.

**D&C 110:11. Where Are the Ten Lost Tribes?**

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** wrote: "Whether these tribes are in the north or not, I am not prepared to say. As I said before, they are 'lost' and until the Lord wishes it, they will not be found. All that I know about it is what the Lord has revealed, and He declares that they will come from the North. ***He has also made it very clear and definite that these lost people are separate and apart from the scattered Israelites***

***now being gathered out."*** (*Signs of the Times,* p. 186; see also Notes and Commentary on Doctrine and Covenants 133:26–34.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 275)

Continuing with the Student Manual:

**(D-6) The Return of the Ten Tribes** (Cont.)

It is apparent from this passage that though the main body of ten of the tribes is lost, there are representatives of all twelve tribes scattered throughout the earth. This statement can be explained as follows:

1. When Assyria attacked the Northern Kingdom, many fled to the safety of the Southern Kingdom.
2. When the Lord led Israel out of Assyria, some remained behind (see Talmage, *Articles of Faith,* p. 325).
3. As the ten tribes traveled north, some stopped along the way—many possibly being scattered throughout Europe and Asia.
4. From time to time the Lord has led groups of Israelites into other areas of the earth: the Nephites and the Mulekites being two such groups (see 1 Nephi 22:3–5). Concerning this scattering, Elder Joseph Fielding Smith wrote: "One of the most interesting and significant parables ever written is that revealed to Zenos and recorded in the fifth chapter of Jacob in the Book of Mormon. It is a parable of the scattering of Israel. If we had the full key to the interpretation, then we would have in detail how Israel was transplanted in all parts of the earth." (*Answers to Gospel Questions,* 2:56–57.)
5. The scriptures teach that remnants of all the tribes of Israel were scattered among the nations of the earth and in the last days will be gathered out from among these nations and from the four quarters of the earth. The remnant known as the lost ten tribes will return as a body out of the north countries. (see Deuteronomy 4:27; 28:29, 64; Jeremiah 16:14–15; 31:8; Ezekiel 11:15–17; Hosea 9:16–17; Daniel 9:7; 1 Nephi 22:3–4; 19:16; 3 Nephi 5:23–24; 21:26–29; D&C 110:11; 133:26–32.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), "Enrichment D: The Assyrian Conquest and the Lost Tribes," p. 115)

Once again, the distinction between the gathering of scattered Israel and the return of the ten tribes as a body is made abundantly clear. Those who do not believe in or teach a figurative or spiritualized interpretation of the ten tribes as a body do so because they do not have faith that the Lord can perform such miracles (i.e., "faith as the Brother of Jared") or because they are ignorant to the prophesies of God, or both.

**President Russell M. Nelson**

Lazy learners and lax disciples will always struggle to muster even a particle of faith.

To do anything well requires effort. Becoming a true disciple of Jesus Christ is no exception. Increasing your faith and trust in Him takes effort. May I offer five suggestions to help you develop that faith and trust.

First, study. Become an engaged learner. Immerse yourself in the scriptures to understand better Christ's mission and ministry.

("Christ Is Risen; Faith in Him Will Move Mountains," General Conference, April 2021)

**(D-6) The Return of the Ten Tribes** (Cont.)

The Doctrine and Covenants clearly foretells the time when the prophets among these tribes will lead the people back in a great and marvelous show of power (see D&C 133:26–34). Jeremiah promised that so marvelous would be this event that no longer would God be called the Lord who led Israel out of Egypt but the Lord who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north (see Jeremiah 16:14–15).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),

"Enrichment D: The Assyrian Conquest and the Lost Tribes," p. 115)

**Jeremiah 16**

**14** ¶ Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

**15** But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

**President Russell M. Nelson**

In coming days, it will not be possible to survive spiritually without the guiding, directing, comforting, and constant influence of the Holy Ghost. …

I am optimistic about the future. … But I am also not naive about the days ahead. …

Our Savior and Redeemer … will perform some of His mightiest works ***between*** now and when He comes again.

("Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives," General Conference, April 2018)

**(23-36) Jeremiah 16:13–21. Doom and Delivery**

In a general conference address **Elder LeGrand Richards** commented on these verses:

"Just contemplate that statement [vv. 14–15] for a few moments. Think how the Jews and the Christians all through these past centuries have praised the Lord for his great hand of deliverance under the hands of Moses when he led Israel out of captivity, and yet here comes Jeremiah with this word of the holy prophet, telling us that in the latter days they shall no more remember that, but how God has gathered scattered Israel from the lands whither he had driven them. …" (In Conference Report, Apr. 1971, p. 143; or *Ensign,* June 1971, pp. 98–99.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), "As Ye Sow, So Shall Ye Reap," p. 241)

**(D-6) The Return of the Ten Tribes (Cont.)**

The appointed time will come when the lost tribes of Israel will return to Zion to receive their blessings at the hands of Ephraim. *"This great gathering will take place under the direction of the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for he holds the keys"* (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine,* p. 458). The lost tribes, as well as all others who want to be numbered in the house of Israel and receive the blessings of the priesthood, must come to Ephraim, who holds the birthright blessings (see Genesis 48:15–22; 1 Chronicles 5:1–2; Jeremiah 31:9).

**Elder Wilford Woodruff** taught that when the ten tribes returned, they would come to Ephraim to obtain the priesthood as well as their endowments and sealings (see *Journal of Discourses,* 4:231–32; 18:127). **Elder Orson Pratt** stated: "God is determined to raise up Prophets among that people, but he will not bestow upon them all the fulness of the blessings of the Priesthood. The fulness will be reserved to be given to them after they come to Zion." (In *Journal of Discourses,* 18:25.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),

"Enrichment D: The Assyrian Conquest and the Lost Tribes," p. 115)

**(D-7) The Lost Tribes to Come to Zion**

When the ten tribes return, they will bring their rich treasures to the children of Ephraim (see D&C 133:30). Part of this rich treasure will be the records, which they have kept all these centuries. In them will be

found the account of their miraculous escape from Assyria, their journey into the land to the north, their history, their prophets, and the appearance to them of the Savior after His Resurrection (see 2 Nephi 29:12–13; 3 Nephi 16:1–3).

In April conference of 1916, **Elder James E. Talmage**, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, spoke of the lost tribes and their records: "There is a tendency among men to explain away what they don't wish to understand in literal simplicity, and we, as Latter-day Saints are not entirely free from the taint of that tendency. … Some people say that prediction is to be explained in this way: A gathering is in progress, and has been in progress from the early days of this Church; and thus the 'Lost Tribes' are now being gathered; but that we are not to look for the return of any body of people now unknown as to their whereabouts. True, the gathering is in progress, this is a gathering dispensation; but the prophecy stands that the tribes shall be brought forth from their hiding place … [and their] scriptures shall become one with the scriptures of the Jews, the holy Bible, and with the scriptures of the Nephites, the Book of Mormon, and with the scriptures of the Latter-day Saints as embodied in the volumes of modern revelation." (In Conference Report, Apr. 1916, p. 130.)

Then in October conference Elder Talmage spoke again of the lost tribes and made this remarkable prediction: "The ten tribes shall come; they are not lost unto the Lord; they shall be brought forth as hath been predicted; *and I say unto you there are those now living—aye, some here present—who shall live to read the records of the Lost Tribes of Israel,* which shall be made one with the record of the Jews, or the Holy Bible, and the record of the Nephites, or the Book of Mormon, even as the Lord hath predicted" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1916, p. 76; emphasis added).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),

"Enrichment D: The Assyrian Conquest and the Lost Tribes," p. 116)

The ten tribes return as a body first to the land of Zion, sometime after they will then return back to the lands of Palestine. There are some members who think that this body returns to Palestine first—***this negates almost all modern revelation including specific points of references provided by the Lord himself in the Book of Mormon.*** The second thing we should pick up on ***is that this group has scriptures.*** Much like those claiming we are in the seventh seal and then providing no proof of events that are supposed to occur, some claim there is no group of Israelites as a body, the gathering is entirely what we are doing right now (i.e., the Spiritual), without addressing the problem of ***no additional scripture.*** If the ten tribes are simply who are being gathered right now, ***where is their book of scripture?*** Where is their personal account of the Savior's visit to them…? If the ten tribes are being gathered now, an event that is supposed to be so miraculous that people will stop talking about Moses, ***why is there no one on the entire planet comparing our missionary force to Moses?*** There are continually blockbuster movies made about Moses—we can't even get C grade movies made about our missionaries, and when we do, they are typically some of the worst missionaries we have, spending the majority of their screen time moping around depressed or as comic relief. Very "Moses-like" indeed. The last thing that we need to pick up on here is the prophecy of Talmage, that some alive in 1917 would live to see this event. This harkens back to *Section One: A Sense of Urgency, Chapter One: The Times of the Gentiles.*

**Doctrine and Covenants 133**

**12** Let them, therefore, who are among the Gentiles flee unto Zion.

**13** And let them who be of Judah flee unto Jerusalem, unto the mountains of the Lord's house.

**14** Go ye out from among the nations, even from Babylon, from the midst of wickedness, which is spiritual Babylon.

**15** But verily, thus saith the Lord, let not your flight be in haste, but let all things be prepared before you; and he that goeth, let him not look back lest sudden destruction shall come upon him.

**26** And they who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord; and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves; and they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence.

**27** And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep.

**28** Their enemies shall become a prey unto them,

**29** And in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water; and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land.

**30** And they shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim, my servants.

**31** And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence.

**32** And there shall they fall down and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim.

**33** And they shall be filled with songs of everlasting joy.

**34** Behold, this is the blessing of the everlasting God upon the tribes of Israel, and the richer blessing upon the head of Ephraim and his fellows.

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

**56** And at that day, when I shall come in my glory, shall the parable be fulfilled which I spake concerning the ten virgins.

**57** For they that are wise and have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived—verily I say unto you, they shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day.

**58** And ***the earth shall be given unto them for an inheritance;*** and they shall multiply and wax strong, and their children shall grow up without sin unto salvation.

**59** ***For the Lord shall be in their midst,*** and his glory shall be upon them, and he will be their king and their lawgiver.

**62** For verily I say unto you, that great things await you;

**63** Ye hear of wars in foreign lands; but, behold, I say unto you, they are nigh, even at your doors, and not many years hence ye shall hear of wars in your own lands.

**65** And with one heart and with one mind, gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you.

**66** And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God;

**67** And the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion.

**68** And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety.

**69** And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another.

**70** And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore we cannot stand.

**71** And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy.

**Isaiah 35**

**7** And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

**8** And an highway shall be there; for a way shall be cast up, and it shall be called the way of holiness. The unclean shall not pass over upon it; but it shall be cast up for those who are clean; and the wayfaring men, though they are accounted fools, shall not err therein.

**9** No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there:

**10** And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

**3 Nephi 21**

**23** And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.

**24** ***And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem.***

**25** And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; ***and I also will be in the midst.***

**26** And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, ***yea, even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem.***

**27** Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, with the Father to prepare the way whereby they may come unto me, that they may call on the Father in my name.

**28** Yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father among all nations ***in preparing the way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance.***

**29** And they shall go out from all nations; and they shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight, for I will go before them, saith the Father, and I will be their rearward.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, ***to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country.*** The people of the Lord, those who have complied with the requirements of the new covenant, have already commenced gathering ***together to Zion, which is in the state of Missouri;*** therefore I declare unto you the warning which the Lord has commanded me to declare unto this generation, remembering that the eyes of my Maker are upon me, and that to Him I am accountable for every word I say, wishing nothing worse to my fellowmen than their eternal salvation; therefore, "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come." Repent ye, repent ye, and embrace the everlasting covenant, and flee to Zion, before the overflowing scourge overtake you, for there are those [of the rising generation] whose eyes shall not be closed in death until they see all these things, which I have spoken, fulfilled. Remember these things; call upon the Lord while He is near, and seek Him while He may be found, is the exhortation of your unworthy servant.

("Zion and Jerusalem," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 17)

Back to the manual:

**(D-7) The Lost Tribes to Come to Zion** (Cont.)

The ten tribes will remain in the land of Zion among the tribe of Ephraim for some time. **Elder Orson Pratt** explained: "How long will they who come from the north countries tarry in the heights of Zion? Sometime. They have got to raise wheat, cultivate the grape, wine and oil, raise flocks and herds, and their souls will have to become as a watered garden. They will dwell in Zion a good while, and during that time, there will be twelve thousand chosen out of each of these ten tribes, besides twelve thousand that will be chosen from Judah, Joseph, and the remaining tribes, one hundred and forty-four thousand in all [see Revelation 7:4–8; D&C 77:11]. Chosen for what? To be sealed in their foreheads. For what purpose? So that the power of death and pestilence and plague that will go forth in those days sweeping over the nations of the earth will have no power over them. These parties who are sealed in their foreheads will go forth among all people, nations and tongues, and gather up and hunt out the house of Israel, wherever they are scattered, and bring as many as they possibly can into the Church of the first-born, preparatory to the great day of the coming of the Lord. One hundred and forty-four thousand missionaries! Quite a host. All this has got to take place. There are persons in this congregation who will be in the midst of Zion, when the ten tribes come to Zion from the north countries, and will assist in bestowing the blessings promised by the Almighty upon the heads of the tribes of Israel. There are servants of God in the midst of this congregation who will lay their hands upon many of each of these twelve thousand, chosen out of the ten tribes, and set them apart as missionaries to visit the nations of the earth and hunt up the remnants of the seed of Jacob." (In *Journal of Discourses,* 18:25.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),

"Enrichment D: The Assyrian Conquest and the Lost Tribes," p. 116)

**Elder Gerald N. Lund**

The Prophet (Joseph Smith) clearly indicates that the twelve thousand sealed from each of the twelve tribes is not just a symbolic representation of the forces of righteousness, as some scholars maintain. They are a great missionary force ***of the sixth seal*** (see D&C 77:10). Joseph Smith shows us that they are ordained high priests chosen from among every nation to carry forth the gospel and bring as many as will come to the true Church (see D&C 77:11). (In another revelation the Prophet indicated that these 144,000 ***would also stand on Mt. Zion with the Savior.*** See D&C 133:18 and compare with Revelation 14:1–5.) The Prophet also said, shortly before his death, "I attended prayer-meeting with the quorum in the assembly room, and made some remarks respecting the hundred and forty-four thousand mentioned by John the Revelator, showing that the selection of persons to form that number had already commenced." [HC, J SMITH 6:196.] This statement would seem to indicate that this great body of missionaries may be composed ***of mortals and immortals together."***

("Insights from the JST into the Book of Revelation," BYU Religious Studies Center)

**Orson Pratt**

Then again, after the six thousand years have ended, before the Lord shall come while these trumpets are sounding, or about that time, we find that there is to be a great work among the nations—which will probably take place in the morning of the seventh thousand years. The ten tribes will have to come forth and come to this land, to be crowned with glory in the midst of Zion by the hands of the servants of God, even the Children of Ephraim; and twelve thousand High Priests will be elected from each of these ten tribes, as well as from the scattered tribes, and sealed in their foreheads, and will be ordained and receive power to gather out of all nations, kindreds, tongues and people as many as will come unto the general assemblage of the Church of the Firstborn. Will not that be a great work? Imagine one hundred and forty-four thousand High Priests going forth among the nations, and gathering out as many as will come to the Church of the Firstborn. All that will be done, probably, in the morning of the seventh thousand years.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 16, Discourse 42, pp. 312–326)

We know a lot more about the 144,000 then people realize or want to admit.

1. We know that they are not chosen, set apart, ordained etc. until ***after the ten tribes return, ergo if the ten tribes never return as a body this number cannot be formed.***
2. We know that they are high priests, ergo these are only men.
3. We know that they are "sealed" which means they have had their calling and election made sure. You cannot have the Second Comforter seal you up unto eternal life when you have not done or fulfilled all the requirements for exaltation, ergo, these are men who are sealed to a wife. We also have the quote from Joseph Smith identifying ***married men*** who ***would*** make up the 144,000. Ergo, "virgin" is a reference to their purity for "the pure in heart shall see God," it has nothing to do with sex.
4. They will be teaching openly to the nations of the world and hunting out the elect. Ergo, this isn't done in secret.
5. The 144,000 will consist of a multitude of types of people. There will be resurrected beings, permanently translated beings (immortal, they can't die until the appointed time), and transfigured people (body is quickened and renewed to be able to withstand plagues, pestilence etc. but as Orson Pratt said, "they will not be changed to immortality"). We know of two such who will "lie dead in the streets" outside old Jerusalem.
6. The 144,000 is an actual number, just like the Quorum of the Twelve has 12 apostles.
7. The Church of the Firstborn and the 144,000 are not the same thing. The 144,000 are a part of the Church of the Firstborn but all members of the Church of the Firstborn will not be a part of the 144,000. Just as the twelve apostles are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but every member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is not an apostle.
8. Revelation 7 occurs after the 144,000 are called, ordained etc. in New Jerusalem.
9. There are no members of the 144,000 from the tribe of Dan, for reasons currently unrevealed.

There are a lot of things we know about the 144,000; none of these are speculative and none of these were ever looked at or taught as figurative or spiritualized, etc. When Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Orson Pratt etc. spoke of them it was always in plain and literal terms.

Continuing and finishing the student manual:

**(D-7) The Lost Tribes to Come to Zion** (Cont.)

> The ten tribes, however, are to eventually receive their land inheritance with Judah and not with Ephraim (see Ether 13:11), and there will come a time after they have received their priesthood blessings when they will go to Jerusalem. In that day will be fulfilled the statement of Jeremiah: "In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers" (Jeremiah 3:18).
>
> **Elder Orson Pratt** stated further: "By and by, when all things are prepared—when the Jews have received their scourging, and Jesus has descended upon the Mount of Olives, the ten tribes will leave Zion, and will go to Palestine, to inherit the land that was given to their ancient fathers, and it will be divided amongst the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. They will go there to dwell in peace in their own land from that time, until the earth shall pass away. But Zion, after their departure, will still remain upon the western hemisphere, and she will be crowned with glory as well as old Jerusalem, and, as the Psalmist David says, she will become the joy of the whole earth. 'Beautiful for situation is Mount Zion on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.'" (In *Journal of Discourses,* 18:68.)
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), "Enrichment D: The Assyrian Conquest and the Lost Tribes," p. 116)

## Righteousness and Truth to Sweep the Earth

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> But to proceed. In the letter alluded to, the principles of repentance and baptism for the remission of sins were not only set forth, but many passages of scripture were quoted, clearly elucidating the subject; let me add, I do positively rely upon the truth of those principles inculcated in the New Testament, and then pass on from the above-named items, to the item or subject of the gathering, and show my views upon this point. It is a principle I esteem to be of the greatest importance to those who are looking for salvation in this generation, or in these, that may be called, "the latter times." ***All that the prophets that have written, from the days of righteous Abel, down to the last man that has left any testimony on record for our consideration, in speaking of the salvation of Israel in the last days, goes directly to show that it consists in the work of the gathering.***
>
> First, I shall begin by quoting from the prophecy of Enoch, speaking of the last days: "Righteousness will I send down out of heaven, and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten, His resurrection from the dead (this resurrection I understand to be the corporeal body); yea, and also the resurrection of all men; righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine own elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, a holy city, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming, for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion a new Jerusalem." (Moses 7:62, 1902 edition.)
>
> ("Righteousness to Sweep the Earth," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 83–84)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Now I understand by this quotation, that God clearly manifested to Enoch the redemption which He prepared, by offering the Messiah as a Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world; and by virtue of the same, the glorious resurrection of the Savior, and the resurrection of all the human family, even a resurrection of their corporeal bodies, is brought to pass; and also righteousness and truth are to sweep the earth as with a flood. And now, I ask, how righteousness and truth are going to sweep the earth as with a flood? ***I will answer. Men and angels are to be co-workers in bringing to pass this great work, and Zion is to be prepared, even a new Jerusalem, for the elect that are to be gathered from the four quarters of the earth, and to be established an holy city, for the tabernacle of the Lord shall be with them.***
>
> ("The Glorious Resurrection," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 84)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Now Enoch was in good company in his views upon this subject: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, ***Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God"*** (Revelation 21:3).
>
> I discover by this quotation, that John upon the isle of Patmos, saw the same things concerning the last days, which Enoch saw. ***But before the tabernacle can be with men, the elect must be gathered from the four quarters of the earth.*** And to show further upon this subject of the gathering, Moses, after having pronounced the blessing and cursing upon the children of Israel, for their obedience or disobedience, says thus:
>
> "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind, among all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey His voice, according to all that I command thee, this day, thou and thy chil-

dren, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will He fetch thee (Deut. 30:1–4)."

("The Elect Must Be Gathered," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 84–85)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

It has been said by many of the learned and wise men, or historians, that the Indians or aborigines of this continent, are of the scattered tribes of Israel. It has been conjectured by many others, that the aborigines of this continent are not of the tribes of Israel, but the ten tribes have been led away into some unknown regions of the north. Let this be as it may, the prophecy I have just quoted "will fetch them," in the last days, and place them in the land which their fathers possessed. And you will find in the 7th verse of the 30th chapter, quoted, "And the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee."

Many may say that this scripture is fulfilled, but let them mark carefully what the prophet says: "If any are driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven," (Which must mean the breadth of the earth). Now this promise is good to any, if there should be such, that are driven out, even in the last days, therefore, the children of the fathers have claim unto this day. And if these curses are to be laid over on the heads of their enemies, wo be unto the Gentiles. (See Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi, Chap. 16, current edition). "Wo unto the unbelieving of the Gentiles, saith the Father." And again (see Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 20:22, current edition, which says), "Behold this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob, and it shall be a New Jerusalem." Now we learn from the Book of Mormon the very identical continent and spot of land upon which the New Jerusalem is to stand, and it must be caught up according to the vision of John upon the isle of Patmos.

Now many will feel disposed to say, that this New Jerusalem spoken of, is the Jerusalem that was built by the Jews on the eastern continent. But you will see, from Revelation 21:2, there was a New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband; that after this, the Revelator was caught away in the Spirit, to a great and high mountain, and saw the great and holy city descending out of heaven from God. Now there are two cites spoken of here. As everything cannot be had in so narrow a compass as a letter, I shall say with brevity, that there is a New Jerusalem to be established on this continent, and also Jerusalem shall be rebuilt on the eastern continent (see Book of Mormon, Ether 13:1–12). "Behold, Ether saw the days of Christ, and he spake also concerning the house of Israel, and the Jerusalem from whence Lehi should come; after it should be destroyed, it should be built up again, a holy city unto the Lord, wherefore it could not be a New Jerusalem, for it had been in a time of old." This may suffice, upon the subject of gathering, until my next.

("The New Jerusalem," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 85–86)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Now men cannot have any possible grounds to say that this is figurative, or that it does not mean what it says: for He is now explaining what He had previously spoken in parables; and according to this language, the end of the world is the destruction of the wicked, the harvest and the end of the world have no allusion directly to the human family in the last days, instead of the earth, as many have imagined; and that which shall precede the coming of the Son of Man, and the restitution of all things spoken of by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began; ***and the angels are to have something to do in this great work, for they are the reapers.*** As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world; that is, as the servants of God go forth warning the nations, both priests and people, and as they harden their hearts and reject the light of truth, these first being delivered over to the buffetings of Satan, and the law and the testimony being closed up, as it was in the case of the Jews, they are left in darkness, and delivered over unto the day of burning; thus being bound up by their creeds, and their bands being made strong by their priests, are prepared for the fulfilment of the saying of the Savior—***"The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." We understand that the work of gathering together of the wheat into barns, or garners, is to take place while the tares are being bound over, and preparing for the day of burning; that after the day of burnings, the righteous shall shine forth like the sun, in the Kingdom of their F***ather. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

("Destruction of the Wicked the End of the World," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 100–101)

**Elder Orson Pratt**

The Gentile believers will gather to Zion; and because of your testimony, all the elect of God, of whatever nation, tongue, and people, will be gathered out year after year; and by-and-by, ***the great and last gathering will be done through instrumentality of angels.*** There will be two, as it were, grinding at a mill; the faithful one will be taken, and the other will be left: there will be two, as it were, sleeping in one bed; one will be picked up by the angels, and the other will be left; and the remnant of the children of God scattered abroad on all the face of the earth will receive their last gathering by the angels.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 7, Discourse 29, p. 188)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

We Cannot Be Perfect **Without Our Dead**

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed. The mustard seed is small, but brings forth a large tree, and the fowls lodge in the branches. ***The fowls are the angels. Thus angels come down, combine together to gather their children, and gather them.*** We cannot be made perfect without them, nor they without us; ***when these things are done,*** the Son of Man will descend, the Ancient of Days sit; we may come to an innumerable company of angels, have communion with and receive instruction from them. Paul told about Moses' proceedings; spoke of the children of Israel being baptized. (1 Cor. 10:1–4.) He knew this, and that all the ordinances and blessings were in the Church. Paul had these things, and we may have the fowls of heaven lodge in the branches, etc.

The "Horn" made war with the Saints and overcame them, until the Ancient of Days came; judgment was given to the Saints of the Most High from the Ancient of Days; the time came that the Saints possessed the Kingdom. This not only makes us ministers here, but in eternity.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 159)

**Doctrine and Covenants 38**

**12** Which causeth silence to reign, and all eternity is pained, ***and the angels are waiting the great command to reap down the earth, to gather the tares that they may be burned;*** and, behold, the enemy is combined.

**D&C 38:10–12. "Eternity Is Pained, and the Angels Are Waiting"**

The imagery of angels waiting to reap down the fields comes from the parable of the wheat and the tares (see Matthew 13:24–43; D&C 86:1–7). **Elder Wilford Woodruff** explained: "It certainly is time that we prepare ourselves for that which is to come. Great things await this generation—both Zion and Babylon. All these revelations concerning the fall of Babylon will have their fulfillment. Forty-five years ago, in speaking to the Church, the Lord said—[D&C 38:10–11]. This causes silence to

reign, and all eternity is pained. The angels of God are waiting to fulfill the great commandment given forty-five years ago, to go forth and reap down the earth because of the wickedness of men. How do you think eternity feels to-day? Why there is more wickedness, a thousand times over, in the United States now, than when that revelation was given. The whole earth is ripe in iniquity; and these inspired men, these Elders of Israel, have been commanded of the Almighty to go forth and warn the world, that their garments may be clear of the blood of all men." (In *Journal of Discourses,* 18:128.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 77)

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

**91** And all things shall be in commotion; and surely, men's hearts shall fail them; for fear shall come upon all people.

**92** ***And angels shall fly through the midst of heaven, crying with a loud voice, sounding the trump of God, saying: Prepare ye, prepare ye, O inhabitants of the earth; for the judgment of our God is come. Behold, and lo, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.***

**93** And immediately there shall appear a great sign in heaven, and all people shall see it together.

**94** And another angel shall sound his trump, saying: That great church, the mother of abominations, that made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, that persecuteth the saints of God, that shed their blood—she who sitteth upon many waters, and upon the islands of the sea—behold, she is the tares of the earth; she is bound in bundles; her bands are made strong, no man can loose them; therefore, she is ready to be burned. And he shall sound his trump both long and loud, and all nations shall hear it.

## The Angel Flying Through the Midst of Heaven

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

How have we come at the Priesthood in the last days? It came down, down, in regular succession. Peter, James, and John had it given to them and they gave it to others. Christ is the Great High Priest; Adam next. Paul speaks of the Church coming to an innumerable company of angels—to God the Judge of all—the spirits of just men made perfect; to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. (Hebrews 12:22–24.)

I saw Adam ***in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman.*** He called together his children and blessed them with a patriarchal blessing. The Lord appeared in their midst, and he (Adam) blessed them all, and foretold what should befall them to the latest generation. This is why Adam blessed his posterity; he wanted to bring them into the presence of God. ***They looked for a city,*** etc., "whose builder and maker is God." (Hebrews 11:10.) Moses sought to bring the children of Israel into the presence of God, through the power of the Priesthood, but he could not. In the first ages of the world they tried to establish the same thing; and there were Eliases raised up who tried to restore these very glories, but did not obtain them; but they prophesied of a day when this glory would be revealed. Paul spoke of the dispensation of the fullness of times, when God would gather together all things in one, etc.; ***and those men to whom these keys have been given, will have to be there; and they without us cannot be made perfect.***

These men are in heaven, but their children are on the earth. Their bowels yearn over us. God sends down men for this reason. "And the Son of Man shall send forth His angels, ***and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that give offense and them that do iniquity."*** (Matthew 13:41.) All these authoritative characters will come down and join hand in hand in bringing about this work.

("Descent of Priesthood," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 158–159)

**Elder Heber C. Kimball**

An army of Elders will be sent to the four quarters of the earth to search out the righteous and warn the wicked of what is coming. All kinds of religions will be started and miracles performed that will deceive the very elect if that were possible. Our sons and daughters must live pure lives so as to be prepared for what is coming. After a while the Gentiles will gather by the thousands to this place, and Salt Lake City will be classed among the wicked cities of the world. A spirit of speculation and extravagance will take possession of the Saints, and the results will be financial bondage. Persecution comes next and all true Latter-day Saints will be tested to the limit. Many will apostatize and others will be still not knowing what to do. Darkness will cover the earth and gross darkness the minds of the people. The judgments of God will be poured out on the wicked to the extent that our Elders from far and near will be called home, or in other words the gospel will be taken from the Gentiles and later on carried to the Jews. The western boundary of the State of Missouri will be swept so clean of its inhabitants that as President Young tells us, when you return to that place, there will not be left so much as a yellow dog to wag his tail. Before that day comes, however, the Saints will be put to a test that will try the integrity of the best of them. The pressure will become so great that the more righteous among them will cry unto the Lord day and night until deliverance comes…

[For] the time is coming when we will be mixed up in these now peaceful valleys to that extent that it will be difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God. Then, brethren, look out for the great sieve, for there will be a great sifting time, and many will fall; for I say unto you there is a test, a Test, a TEST coming, and who will be able to stand? This church has before it many close places through which it must pass before the work of God is crowned with victory. To meet the difficulties that are coming it will be necessary for you to have knowledge of the truth of this work for yourselves. The difficulties will be of such character that the man or woman who does not possess this personal knowledge or witness will fall. If you have not got the testimony, live right and call upon the Lord and cease not 'till you obtain it. If you do not, you will not stand… Then the Prophet Joseph and others will make their appearance and those who have remained faithful will be selected to return to Jackson County, Missouri and take part in the building of that beautiful city, the New Jerusalem.

(May 1868, in *Deseret News,* 23 May 1931; see also Conference Report, Oct. 1930, p. 58–59; Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball,* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1945, p. 446, Smith, Robert W. and Elisabeth A., *Scriptural and Secular Prophecies Pertaining to The Last Days,* Ninth Edition, Pyramid Press, SLC, UT, 1947, pp. 134–138; *Deseret News,* May 23, 1931; W. Cleon Skousen, *Prophecy and Modern Times,* pp. 31–33, An Army of Elders, May 1868, Heber C. Kimball Reported by his son J. Golden Kimball, CR October 1930, p. 58. See also Prophetic Sayings of Heber C. Kimball to Sister Amanda H. Wilcox)

**Doctrine and Covenants 103:21–28. The Lord commands the Prophet Joseph Smith to go to Zion**

In December 1833 the Lord revealed a parable regarding the redemption of the land of Zion. In that parable "a certain nobleman" had his servants plant 12 olive trees on a "very choice piece of land" (D&C 101:44). He commanded his servants to "set watchmen round about them, and build a tower, that one may overlook the land" and protect it from the enemy (D&C 101:45). However, the servants did not complete the tower, and the enemy "came by night, and … destroyed their works, and broke down the olive-trees" (see D&C 101:46–51). The nobleman, the Lord of the vineyard, then said to one of his servants, "Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, … and go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard" (D&C 101:55–56).

In the revelation recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 103, the Lord identified the Prophet Joseph Smith as the servant in the parable who ***would*** "redeem," or reclaim, the vineyard (see D&C 103:21).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (2018))

**D&C 29:8. "They Shall Be Gathered into One Place"**

**Elder Harold B. Lee** explained:

"The spirit of gathering has been with the Church from the days of that restoration. Those who are of the blood of Israel, have a righteous desire after they are baptized, to gather together with the body of the Saints at the designated place. ...

"... The Lord has placed the responsibility for directing the work of gathering in the hands of the leaders of the Church to whom he will reveal his will ***where and when such gatherings would take place in the future.*** It would be well—before the frightening events concerning the fulfilment of all God's promises and predictions are upon us, that the Saints in every land prepare themselves and look forward to the instruction that shall come to them from the First Presidency of this Church ***as to where they shall be gathered and not be disturbed in their feelings until such instruction is given to them as it is revealed by the Lord to the proper authority."*** (In Conference Report, Apr. 1948, p. 55.)

The Saints must look to the First Presidency and gather at whatever time and in whatever manner they prescribe.

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 60)

**D&C 45:64–75. Zion: A Place of Defense and Refuge**

In the scriptures four words seem closely related to the concept of Zion: *gathering, preparation, defense,* and *refuge.* The tribulations and judgments that will be poured out upon the world prior to the Second Coming will be so extensive and devastating that if the Lord did not prepare a means of preservation, ***His people too would perish.*** But He has prepared a means for His people to escape those terrible times; ***that means is Zion. Enoch was told that the Lord would preserve His people in the tribulations of the last days by gathering His elect to Zion where they could gird up their loins (prepare themselves) and look forward to His coming*** (see Moses 7:61–62).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 98)

**D&C 77:9. What is the Significance of the Angel from the East Sealing the Servants of God?**

The four angels who are given power over the earth are kept from sending forth desolations upon the earth until God's servants are sealed in their foreheads. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that this sealing "signifies sealing the blessing upon their heads, ***meaning the everlasting covenant, thereby making their calling and election sure"*** (*Teachings,* p. 321)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 169)

**Elder Orson Pratt** gave this additional explanation:

When the Temple is built [in the New Jerusalem] the sons of the two Priesthoods... will enter into that Temple in this generation... and all of them who are pure in heart will behold the face of the Lord and that too before he comes in his glory in the clouds of heaven, for he will suddenly come to his Temple, and he will purify the sons of Moses and of Aaron, until they shall be prepared to offer in that Temple an offering that shall be acceptable in the sight of the Lord. In doing this, he will purify not only the minds of the Priesthood in that Temple, but he will purify their bodies until they shall be quickened, renewed and strengthened, and they will be partially changed, not to immortality, but changed in part that they can be filled with the power of God, and they can stand in the presence of Jesus, and behold his face in the midst of that Temple.

This will prepare them for further ministrations among the nations of the earth, it will prepare them to go forth in the days of tribulation and vengeance upon the nations of the wicked, when God will smite them with pestilence, plague and earthquake, such as former generations never knew. Then the servants of God will need to be armed with the power of God, they will need to have that sealing blessing pronounced upon their foreheads that they can stand forth in the midst of these desolations and plagues and not be overcome by them. When John the Revelator describes this scene he says he saw four angels sent forth, ready to hold the four winds that should blow from the four quarters of heaven. Another angel ascended from the east and cried to the four angels, and said, "Smite not the earth now, but wait a little while." "How long?" "Until the servants of our God are sealed in their foreheads." What for? To prepare them to stand forth in the midst of these desolations and plagues, and not be overcome. When they are prepared, when they have received a renewal of their bodies in the Lord's Temple, and have been filled with the Holy Ghost and purified as gold and silver in a furnace of fire, then they will be prepared to stand before the nations of the earth and preach glad tidings of salvation in the midst of judgments that are to come like a whirlwind upon the wicked.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 15, Discourse 45)

**Doctrine and Covenants 77**

**9** Q. What are we to understand by the angel ascending from the east, Revelation 7th chapter and 2nd verse?

**A.** We are to understand that the angel ascending from the east is he to whom is given the seal of the living God over the twelve tribes of Israel; wherefore, he crieth unto the four angels having the everlasting gospel, saying: Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And, if you will receive it, this is Elias which was to come to gather together the tribes of Israel and restore all things.

**10** Q. What time are the things spoken of in this chapter to be accomplished?

**A.** They are to be accomplished in the sixth thousand years, or the opening of the sixth seal.

**11** Q. What are we to understand by sealing the one hundred and forty-four thousand, out of all the tribes of Israel—twelve thousand out of every tribe?

**A.** We are to understand that those who are sealed are high priests, ordained unto the holy order of God, to administer the everlasting gospel; for they are they who are ordained out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, by the angels to whom is given power over the nations of the earth, to bring as many as will come to the church of the Firstborn.

**Revelation 7**

*John also sees in the sixth seal the Restoration of the gospel, the sealing of the 144,000, and the hosts of the exalted of all nations.*

**4** And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. ...

**9** After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

**10** And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. ...

**13** And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

**14** And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

**15** Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

**16** They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

**17** For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

**Revelation 7:4–8. The Hundred and Forty-Four Thousand**

In Doctrine and Covenants 77:11 the Lord explained to Joseph Smith that the number 144,000 mentioned in Revelation 7:4–8 is the number of representatives out of the twelve tribes of Israel who will be ordained to assist others in their quest for exaltation (see the commentary for Revelation 14:1–5). It is not, as some people believe, the total number of people who will be exalted. "The church of the Firstborn" refers to those who will be exalted and become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ (D&C 77:11). Members of the Lord's earthly Church—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—who live righteously and receive the ordinances of exaltation will become members of the Lord's heavenly Church—the Church of the Firstborn (see D&C 93:20–22).

(*New Testament Student Manual* (2018))

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

At his Second Coming, "the Lamb shall stand upon Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having his Father's name written on their foreheads." (D.&C. 133:81; Rev. 14:1–5.) These 144,000 are Gods, as the name on their foreheads specifies; their callings and elections have been made sure; they are exalted personages; they are "redeemed from among men, … And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." (Rev. 14:4–5.) They have attained perfection. These brethren, 12,000 from each of the tribes of Israel-excepting for some unspecified reason the tribe of Dan (Rev. 7:2–8)—"are high priests, ordained unto the holy order of God, to administer the everlasting gospel; for they are they who are ordained out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, by the angels to whom is given power over the nations of the earth, to bring as many as will come to the church of the Firstborn." (D.&C. 77:9–11.) They are part of "a great multitude, which no man could number"—all of whom shall have membership in the Church of the Firstborn and therefore be exalted beings. (Rev. 7:9–17; Heb. 12:22–24.)

(*Mormon Doctrine,* "One Hundred Forty-Four Thousand," p. 546)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

The Savior said when these tribulations should take place, it should be committed to a man who should be a witness over the whole world: the keys of knowledge, power and revelations should be revealed to a witness who should hold the testimony to the world. ***It has always been my province… Just at the time when some men think that I have no right to the keys of the Priesthood—just at that time I have the greatest right.***

All the testimony is that the Lord in the last days would commit the keys of the Priesthood to a witness over all people. Has the Gospel of the kingdom commenced in the last days? And will God take it from the man until He takes him Himself? I have read it precisely as the words flowed from the lips of Jesus Christ. ***John the Revelator saw an angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth.***

***The scripture is ready to be fulfilled when great wars, famines, pestilence, great distress, judgments, &c., are ready to be poured out on the inhabitants of the earth. John saw the angel having the holy Priesthood, who should preach the everlasting Gospel to all nations. God had an angel—a special messenger—ordained and prepared for that purpose in the last days. Woe, woe be to that man or set of men who lift up their hands against God and His witness in these last days: for they shall deceive almost the very chosen ones!***

("Interpretation of Scripture," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 364–365)

**D&C 133:17, 36. Who Was "the Angel Crying through the Midst of Heaven"?**

The language of this verse is similar to the language of Revelation 14:6–7. **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** wrote:

"Now, as to the actual work of restoration—what angel performed this mighty deed, this work which involves the salvation of all men on earth in these latter-days? Who restored the everlasting gospel? Was it one angel or many?

"It is traditional (and true!) to reply: 'Moroni, son of Mormon, the now resurrected Nephite prophet, who holds the keys of "the stick of Ephraim" (D. & C. 27:5), the one through whose ministry the Book of Mormon was again brought to light.' The reasoning is that the Book of Mormon contains 'the fulness of the everlasting gospel' (D. & C. 135:3); that therein is God's message of salvation for all of earth's inhabitants; and that this gospel message is now being taken by the Lord's witnesses to one nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people after another. …

"But other angels were yet to come—Moses, Elias, Elijah, Gabriel, Raphael, and 'divers angels, … all declaring their dispensation, their rights, their keys, their honors, their majesty and glory, and the power of their priesthood; giving line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little.' (D.&C. 128:21.)

"Thus the angel Moroni brought the message, that is, the word; but other angels brought the keys and priesthood, the power. And in the final analysis the fulness of the everlasting gospel consists of all of the truths and powers needed to enable men to gain a fulness of salvation in the celestial heaven." (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 3:528–30.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 339)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

At a conference of the Elders of the Church held at the home of Jared Carter, April 21, 1834, the Prophet read the second chapter of Joel and then made the following remarks:

It is very difficult for us to communicate to the churches all that God has revealed to us, in consequence of tradition; for we are differently situated from any other people that ever existed upon this earth; consequently those former revelations cannot be suited to our conditions; they were given to other people, who were before us; but in the last days, God was to call a remnant, in which was to be deliverance, as well as in Jerusalem and Zion. Now if God should give no more revelations, where will we find Zion and this remnant? The time is near when desolation is to cover the earth, and then God will have a place of deliverance in his remnant, and in Zion,

Take away the Book of Mormon and the revelations, and where is our religion? We have none; for without Zion, and a place of deliverance, we must fall; because the time is near when the sun will be darkened, and the moon turn to blood, and the stars fall from the heaven, and the earth reel to and fro. ***Then, if this is the case, and if we are not sanctified and gathered to the places God has appointed, with all our former professions and our great love for the Bible, we must fall; we cannot stand; we cannot be saved; for God will gather out his Saints from the Gentiles, and then comes desolation and destruction, and none can escape except the pure in heart who are gathered."***—DHC 2:52.

("Importance of Revelation," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp.70–71)

# As a Type

## What is Typology?

**typology**
*noun*

1. The study or systematic classification of types that have characteristics or traits in common.
2. A theory or doctrine of types, as in scriptural studies.
3. The doctrine of types or symbols; a discourse on types, especially those of Scripture.

**(C-1) The Importance of Symbols**

> … the scriptures, which contain the word of the Lord revealed for His children, abound with similes, metaphors, parables, allegories, types, and symbols. The symbolism is so profound and so extensive that if one does not have an understanding of the meaning of that symbolism, many of the most important and satisfying truths will be missed.
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Genesis–2 Samuel* (Third edition, 2003), "Enrichment C: Symbolism and Typology in the Old Testament," p. 111)

A type is a prophetic pre-echo foretelling of future events, in the forms of stories, examples, parables, etc.

## The Book of Mormon: Written for Members

**Mormon 8:27–41; 9:1–6, 27–37 "Written for Our Day"**

> Imagine living hundreds of years ago but knowing what it would be like to live in our time. Moroni experienced this; the Lord showed him our day. Moroni described sins and attitudes that would be prevalent in the last days. He invited us to "turn … unto the Lord" (Mormon 9:6) and gave other counsel to help us follow Jesus Christ. This lesson can help you understand that the Book of Mormon is written to help us, in the latter days, turn to the Lord.
>
> Moroni wrote to us
>
> Imagine you lived a long time ago and were asked to write a message to be put in a time capsule that would be opened in our day.
>
> - What warning, advice, or encouragement would you give to help someone navigate today's challenges?
>
> Before Mormon died, he entrusted his son Moroni with the gold plates (see Mormon 8:1). Moroni described one way the Lord helped him to know what to write to the people in our day. Read Mormon 8:34–35; 9:30, looking for ways the Lord blessed Moroni in his sacred responsibility.
>
> - What did the Lord show Moroni?
> - What truths can we learn from this?
>
> One truth we learn is that Jesus Christ inspired Book of Mormon prophets to write with our day in mind.
>
> - How might knowing that the Book of Mormon prophets saw our day influence the way we read the Book of Mormon?
>
> (*Book of Mormon Seminary Teacher Manual* (2024))

**President Ezra Taft Benson**

> If they saw our day, and chose those things which would be of greatest worth to us, is not that how we should study the Book of Mormon? We should constantly ask ourselves, "Why did the Lord inspire Mormon (or Moroni or Alma) to include that in his record? What lesson can I learn from that to help me live in this day and age?
>
> ("The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion," *Ensign,* Nov. 1986)

**Elder Gary E. Stevenson**

> Do you realize that the Book of Mormon was written for you—and for your day? This book is one of the blessings of living in what we call the dispensation of the fulness of times. Although the Book of Mormon was written by inspired, ancient authors—many of whom were prophets—they and the people of their day did not have the benefit of possessing the whole book. You now have easily within your reach the sacred record that prophets, priests, and kings treasured, embraced, and preserved! You have the benefit of holding in your hands the complete Book of Mormon. Interestingly, one of the Book of Mormon prophets, Moroni, saw our day—your day. He even saw you, in vision, many hundreds of years ago!
>
> ("Look to the Book, Look to the Lord," *Ensign* or *Liahona,* Nov. 2016, 46; referenced in *Book of Mormon Seminary Teacher Manual* (2024), "Mormon 8:27–41; 9:1–6, 27–37")

If this is true, which I testify it is, most of the stories included within The Book of Mormon must contain many types, shadows, etc. for us in the last days—for why else would they include them in the book for us in the latter-days?

## The Focus

The focus of almost all types, shadows, etc. point to the sacrifice and atonement of our Savior Jesus Christ during his mortal ministry. This is a given. But what is the second most prophesied time period? What, according to the Lord, is the second most pivotal moment in human history?

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> The building up of Zion is a cause that has interested the people of God in every age; it is a theme upon which prophets, priests and kings have dwelt with peculiar delight; they have looked forward with joyful anticipation to the day in which we live; and fired with heavenly and joyful anticipations they have sung and written and prophesied of this our day; but they died without the sight; we are the favored people that God has made choice of to bring about the Latter-day glory; it is left for us to see, participate in and help to roll forward the Latter-day glory, "the dispensation of the fulness of times, when God will gather together all things that are in heaven, and all things that are upon the earth," "even in one," when the Saints of God will be gathered in one from every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue, when the Jews will be gathered together into one, the wicked will also be gathered together to be destroyed, as spoken of by the prophets; the Spirit of God will also dwell with His people, and be withdrawn from the rest of the nations, and all things whether in heaven or on earth will be in one, even in Christ. The heavenly Priesthood will unite with the earthly, to bring about those great purposes; and whilst we are thus united in one common cause, to roll forth the kingdom of God, the heavenly Priesthood are not idle spectators, the Spirit of God will be showered down from above, and it will dwell in our midst. The blessings of the Most High will rest upon our tabernacles, and our name will be handed down to future ages; our children will rise up and call us blessed; and generations yet unborn will dwell with peculiar delight upon the scenes that we have passed through, the privations that we have endured; the untiring zeal that we have manifested; the all but insurmountable difficulties that we

> have overcome in laying the foundation of a work that brought about the glory and blessing which they will realize; a work that God and angels have contemplated with delight for generations past; that fired the souls of the ancient patriarchs and prophets; a work that is destined to bring about the destruction of the powers of darkness, the renovation of the earth, the glory of God, and the salvation of the human family.
>
> ("All Things to Be Gathered in One," *TPJS,* p. 231)

Besides the Atonement of the Savior, no single other event or series of events is more prophesied about than the Redemption of Zion, and the building of the New Jerusalem. Period. With that in mind it should be easy to find types, shadows, etc., everywhere in the scriptures for this time period (particularly in The Book of Mormon). In this chapter I will go over some of the many, many types dealing with this time period that we haven't already gone over as "parables." This list is by no means "all inclusive" and might grow over time, so check your version number—it is simply to open your eyes to the purpose of The Book of Mormon and almost all ancient prophecy, for all looked to the latter days—to the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem—as "the day of their salvation." Once you see it, you will never unsee it, and The Book of Mormon (and all scripture) will no longer be a closed and sealed record unto you.

## Joseph in Egypt

There really isn't a better place to start than Joseph in Egypt as a type. It checks off all the boxes we are looking for so clearly!

**Ether 13**

> **6** And that a New Jerusalem should be built up upon this land, unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph, ***for which things there has been a type.***
>
> **7** For as Joseph brought his father down into the land of Egypt, even so he died there; wherefore, the Lord brought a remnant of the seed of Joseph out of the land of Jerusalem, that he might be merciful unto the seed of Joseph that they should perish not, even as he was merciful unto the father of Joseph that he should perish not.
>
> **8** Wherefore, the remnant of the house of Joseph shall be built upon this land; and it shall be a land of their inheritance; and they shall build up ***a holy city*** unto the Lord, like unto the Jerusalem of old; and they shall no more be confounded, until the end come when the earth shall pass away.

Has it all doesn't it? Joseph Smith, the Marvelous Work and Wonder, the New Jerusalem, etc., but wait! There is more!

**(C-6) Figurative language can convey truth and meaning to all levels of spiritual maturity.**

> After teaching the multitude the parable of the four kinds of soil, Jesus admonished them, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Matthew 13:9). This statement signaled to His listeners that what the Savior had just said was more than just a nice story. The disciples later came to Him and asked, "Why speakest thou unto them [the multitude] in parables?" (Matthew 13:10). The Savior's answer is at first puzzling. He explained that He taught that way because the multitude refused to see and hear spiritual truths. **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** pointed out the significance of the Savior's use of parables:
>
> "Our Lord used *parables* on frequent occasions during his ministry to teach gospel truths. His purpose, however, in telling these short stories was *not* to present the truths of his gospel in plainness so that all his hearers would understand. ***Rather it was so to phrase and hide the doctrine involved that only the spiritually literate would understand it, while those whose understandings were darkened would remain in darkness.*** (Matt. 13:10–17; [JST], Matt. 21:34.) It is never proper to teach any person more than his spiritual capacity qualifies him to assimilate." (*Mormon Doctrine,* p. 553.)
>
> To the spiritually illiterate the parable of the soils is a lovely little story. To one in tune with the Spirit and full of understanding of gospel truths, it is far more. ***Thus, symbolic language can both* reveal *and* conceal *truth, depending on the readiness of the individual who hears.***
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Genesis–2 Samuel* (Third edition, 2003), "Enrichment Section C: Symbolism and Typology in the Old Testament" p. 112)

So the Lord teaches things in parables, types, shadows, etc. ***for the purpose of concealing truth!*** Well, how does that relate to Joseph in Egypt as a type?!

Continuing to read in **Ether 13**:

> **13** ***And I was about to write more, but I am forbidden;*** but great and marvelous were the prophecies of Ether; but they esteemed him as naught, and cast him out; and he hid himself in the cavity of a rock by day, and by night he went forth viewing the things which should come upon the people.
>
> **14** And as he dwelt in the cavity of a rock he made the remainder of this record, viewing the destructions which came upon the people, by night.
>
> **15** And it came to pass that in that same year in which he was cast out from among the people there began to be a great war among the people, for there were many who rose up, who were mighty men, and sought to destroy Coriantumr by their secret plans of wickedness, of which hath been spoken.

Can no one see the parallels on this already? Insane! Moroni was going to expound and explain this "type" fully, but the Lord forbid him. Why? To conceal knowledge…

**3 Nephi 26**

> **8** And these things have I written, which are a lesser part of the things which he taught the people; and I have written them to the intent that they may be brought again unto this people, from the Gentiles, according to the words which Jesus hath spoken.
>
> **9** And when they shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things then shall the greater things be made manifest unto them.
>
> **10** And if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation.
>
> **11** Behold, I was about to write them, all which were engraven upon the plates of Nephi, but the Lord forbade it, saying: ***I will try the faith of my people.***
>
> **12** Therefore I, Mormon, do write the things which have been commanded me of the Lord. And now I, Mormon, make an end of my sayings, and proceed to write the things which have been commanded me.

And when Ether's expounding of the doctrine, of prophecy was rejected, Ether dwelt in the cavity of a rock, and watched as destruction fell upon the people—because they would not learn, repent, and produce fruit meet for their Father's Kingdom. So, let's look at Joseph in Egypt and quickly connect these two.

**2 Nephi 4**

> **1** And now, I, Nephi, speak concerning the prophecies of which my father hath spoken, concerning Joseph, who was carried into Egypt.
>
> **2** For behold, he truly prophesied concerning all his seed. ***And the prophecies which he wrote, there are not many greater.*** And he prophesied concerning us, and our future generations; and they are written upon the plates of brass.

If there were few prophecies greater than those of Joseph would they not A) have been expounded upon by Jesus Christ when He came to

visit them in 3rd Nephi and thus B) have been included in the book by Mormon, a book written specifically by and for descendants of Joseph?

Lehi prophesies that the words of Joseph would eventually go forth (1 Nephi 5:14–19, 2 Nephi 3:2–25) but yet there currently is a complete absence from our Book of Mormon of the words of Joseph—this should give people all the keys of insight they need to know what is included in the sealed portion and what part the Lord is withholding to "test the faith of His people." We then have, wrapping up the Book of Mormon, Moroni also mentioning Joseph in Egypt as a type and being able to say nothing more on the subject.

So in recap, we have Nephi at the beginning of the Book of Mormon quoting extensively from Isaiah the chapters dealing primary with the New Jerusalem and the Book of Joseph being mentioned as the key. We then have Jesus in the apex of the Book of Mormon quoting from multiple sources, once again dealing primarily with the events leading up to the building of the New Jerusalem, and surprisingly there isn't a single mention of the Book of Joseph despite the fact that Jesus is talking to the descendants of Joseph, and Nephi clearly taught that there were few greater prophecies than that of Joseph's. We then have Mormon saying that he was forbidden to write everything that Jesus expounded at that time. We then have Moroni at the end of the Book of Mormon once again talking about the building of the New Jerusalem and Joseph being the key, also being told he couldn't expound further. It shouldn't surprise anybody then to learn that the book Joseph Smith Jr. was working on when he was martyred was none other than the translation of the Book of Joseph (Barney, Quinten, "The Joseph Smith Papyri and the Writings of Joseph of Egypt," *Journal of Mormon History,* Vol. 42, No. 2 (April 2016), pp. 95–109)

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

> The day shall come when the Book of Joseph shall be restored and its contents shall be known again. (*Mormon Doctrine,* p. 97)

That should provide compelling enough proof, given the amount of prophets being stopped right at the Book of Joseph, to know that the Book of Joseph with Joseph being sold into Egypt as a type are the keys to understanding the Lord testing the Saints' faith to get them to the level of that of the brother of Jared and the redemption and building of New Jerusalem.

So let's learn about Joseph being sold into Egypt as a type by learning about what happened to Joseph in Egypt and then transposing that knowledge over to our day.

**Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 37–50)**

Joseph's brothers were jealous of him and cast him into a pit. Later they told their father that Joseph had been slayed by wild beasts.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> In the evening I attended meeting in the Seventies' Hall. George J. Adams preached and I made some observations afterwards, and related a dream which I had a short time since. I thought I was riding out in my carriage, and my guardian angel was along with me. We went past the Temple and had not gone much further before we espied two large snakes so fast locked together that neither of them had any power. I inquired of my guide what I was to understand by that. He answered, "Those snakes represent Dr. Foster and Chauncey L. Higbee. They are your enemies and desire to destroy you; but you see they are so fast locked together that they have no power of themselves to hurt you." I then thought I was riding up Mulholland street, but my guardian angel was not along with me. On arriving at the prairie, I was overtaken and seized by William and Wilson Law and others, saying, "Ah, ah! We have got you at last! We will secure you and put you in a safe place!" and, without any ceremony dragged me out of my carriage, tied my hands behind me, and threw me into a deep, dry pit, where I remained in a perfectly helpless condition, and they went away. While struggling to get out, I heard Wilson Law screaming for help hard by. I managed to unloose myself so as to make a spring, when I caught hold of some grass which grew at the edge of the pit.
>
> I looked out of the pit and saw Wilson Law at a little distance attacked by ferocious wild beasts, and heard him cry out, "Oh Brother Joseph, come and save me!" I replied, "I cannot, for you have put me into this deep pit." On looking out another way, I saw William Law with outstretched tongue, blue in the face, and the green poison forced out of his mouth, caused by the coiling of a large snake around his body. It had also grabbed him by the arm, a little above the elbow, ready to devour him. He cried out in the intensity of his agony, "Oh, Brother Joseph, Brother Joseph, come and save me, or I die!" I also replied to him, "I cannot, William; I would willingly, but you have tied me and put me in this pit, and I am powerless to help you or liberate myself." In a short time after my guide came and said aloud, "Joseph, Joseph, what are you doing there?" I replied, "My enemies fell upon me, bound me and threw me in." He then took me by the hand, and drew me out of the pit, set me free, and we went away rejoicing.
>
> (June 13, 1844—DHC 6:461–462)

**Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 37–50)**

Joseph is sold into Egypt as a slave and ends up in prison. While in prison he is given the keys of the prison and maintains a role managing the prison.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> If my life is of no value to my friends, it is of no value to me. Hyrum, we are going back. (See *Essentials in Church History,* p. 374.)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> I am going like a lamb to the slaughter, but I am as calm as a summer's morning I have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward all men. (*Essentials in Church History,* p. 376.)

**Doctrine and Covenants 135**

> **1** To seal the testimony of this book and the Book of Mormon, we announce the martyrdom of Joseph Smith the Prophet, and Hyrum Smith the Patriarch. They were shot in Carthage jail, on the 27th of June, 1844, about five o'clock p.m., by an armed mob—painted black—of from 150 to 200 persons. Hyrum was shot first and fell calmly, exclaiming: I am a dead man! Joseph leaped from the window, and was shot dead in the attempt, exclaiming: O Lord my God! They were both shot after they were dead, in a brutal manner, and both received four balls.
>
> **2** John Taylor and Willard Richards, two of the Twelve, were the only persons in the room at the time; the former was wounded in a savage manner with four balls, but has since recovered; the latter, through the providence of God, escaped, without even a hole in his robe.
>
> **3** Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer of the Lord, has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it. In the short space of twenty years, he has brought forth the Book of Mormon, which he translated by the gift and power of God, and has been the means of publishing it on two continents; has sent the fulness of the everlasting gospel, which it contained, to the four quarters of the earth; has brought forth the revelations and commandments which compose this book of Doctrine and Covenants, and many other wise documents and instructions for the benefit of the children of men; gathered many thousands of the Latter-day Saints, founded a great city, and left a fame and name that cannot be slain. He lived great, and he died great in the eyes of God and his people; and like most of the Lord's anointed in ancient times, has sealed his mission and his

works with his own blood; and so has his brother Hyrum. In life they were not divided, and in death they were not separated!

**Brigham Young**

He holds the keys of that kingdom for the last dispensation—the keys to rule in the spirit world; and he rules there triumphantly, for he gained full power and a glorious victory over the power of Satan while he was yet in the flesh, and was a martyr to his religion and to the name of Christ, which gives him a most perfect victory in the spirit world. He reigns there as supreme a being in his sphere, capacity, and calling, as God does in heaven.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 7, Discourse 45, p. 289, October 9, 1859)

**Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 37–50)**

Pharaoh, the sun god, raises Joseph from prison and makes him his governor.

**3 Nephi 21**

**10** But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them. Yet I will heal him, for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.

The Lord promises that though Joseph Smith is martyred, "yet I will [resurrect] him."

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**55** And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;

**56** And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard; for it is mine; I have bought it with money.

**57** Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen.

**58** And inasmuch as they gather together against you, avenge me of mine enemies, that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land.

**59** And the servant said unto his lord: When shall these things be?

**60** And he said unto his servant: When I will; go ye straightway, and do all things whatsoever I have commanded you;

**61** And this shall be my seal and blessing upon you—a faithful and wise steward in the midst of mine house, a ruler in my kingdom.

**62** And his servant went straightway, and did all things whatsoever his lord commanded him; and after many days all things were fulfilled.

**Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 37–50)**

Joseph in Egypt prepares the people and saves them from the seven-year famine.

**Blessing given to Joseph Smith by Oliver Cowdery** (September 22, 1835)

For, like Joseph of old shall he be: he shall save the just from desolation, by the wise counsel of the Almighty; for by his direction shall they gather into storehouses and barns, till they overflow with the richness of the fruit of harvest: and by this means shall the just be saved from famine, while the nations of the wicked are distressed and faint.

(*Patriarchal Blessings Book,* Volume 2:28, Church Historians Office; *The Joseph Smith Papers,* "Blessing from Oliver Cowdery, 22 September 1835," pp. 15–16)

**Heber C. Kimball**

Before that day comes, however, the Saints will be put to a test that will try the integrity of the best of them. The pressure will become so great that the more righteous among them will cry unto the Lord day and night until deliverance comes. Then the Prophet Joseph and others will make their appearance and those who have remained faithful will be selected to return to Jackson County, Missouri and take part in the building of that beautiful city, the New Jerusalem.

(May 1868, in *Deseret News,* 23 May 1931; see also Conference Report, Oct. 1930, pp. 58–59)

**Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 37–50)**

Two+ years into the famine Joseph's brothers join Joseph in the foreign land under the direction of Joseph. Eventually even Joseph's father joins him in the foreign land once everything is prepared.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 17)

**Blessing given to Joseph Smith by Oliver Cowdery** (September 22, 1835)

In due time shall he go forth toward the north, and by the power of his word shall the deep begin to give way and the ice melt before the sun. By the keys of the Kingdom shall he lead Israel into the land of Zion while the house of Jacob shouts in the danse and in the song—Joy, O my soul, in that day, for thou shalt be with him and bear thy part in the keys which are confirmed thee for an everlasting priesthood, forever and ever—Joy, O my heart, in that day, with thanksgiving and with praise, for thou shalt stand with him before the hosts of Israel—the lame shall leap as a hart, the old shall renew his strength, and the virgin of Israel, with the youth, shall exalt the name of our God upon harps and instruments of tens[e] strings.

(*Patriarchal Blessings Book,* Volume 2:28, Church Historians Office; *The Joseph Smith Papers,* "Blessing from Oliver Cowdery, 22 September 1835," pp. 15–16)

**Doctrine and Covenants 133**

**26** And they who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord; and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves; and they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence.

**27** And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep.

**28** Their enemies shall become a prey unto them,

**29** And in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water; and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land.

**30** And they shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim, my servants.

**31** And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence.

**32** And there shall they fall down and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim.

**33** And they shall be filled with songs of everlasting joy.

**34** Behold, this is the blessing of the everlasting God upon the tribes of Israel, and the richer blessing upon the head of Ephraim and his fellows.

**3 Nephi 21**

**23** And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.

**24** And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem.

**25** And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst.

**26** And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, yea, ***even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem.***

**27** Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, with the Father to prepare the way whereby they may come unto me, that they may call on the Father in my name.

**28** Yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father among all nations in preparing the way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance.

**29** And they shall go out from all nations; and they shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight, for I will go before them, saith the Father, and I will be their rearward.

**2 Nephi 22**

**1** And then shall that which is written come to pass: Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child; for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.

**Moses 7**

**61** ...but my people will I preserve;

**62** And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.

Does not "Joseph in Egypt" play out exactly as a type for what is transpiring today and will transpire? Does it not confirm exactly the order of events leading up to the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem? It does... Without this plain understanding and reading would "Joseph in Egypt as a type" make any sense whatsoever? It would not... Which is why it is there to A) conceal knowledge and B) test the faith of Saints.

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

**56** And at that day, when I shall come in my glory, shall the parable be fulfilled which I spake concerning the ten virgins.

**57** For they that are wise and have received the truth, and have taken the Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived—verily I say unto you, they shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day.

**58** And the earth shall be given unto them for an inheritance; and they shall multiply and wax strong, and their children shall grow up without sin unto salvation.

**59** For the Lord shall be in their midst, and his glory shall be upon them, and he will be their king and their lawgiver.

**60** And now, behold, I say unto you, it shall not be given unto you to know any further concerning this chapter, ...

Similar, eh? Because it is talking about the same time, same theme, same events... Those who are wise understood the types and meanings, and what is the biggest theme in Joseph in Egypt as a type? A famine. Period. And if you understand that "the famine" is central to the building of New Jerusalem, what will you do? You will "keep oil in your lamps as you are commanded to," knowing that Joseph will return, and "oil in your lamps" will be required to enter. This also, once again, further proves what "oil in your lamps" represents as a primary interpretation.

## Getting the Brass Plates

The last example of a type was a little bit meatier, so let's do a simple one next: Nephi and his brothers going back and getting the plates of brass from Laban.

1. Lehi and his family are commanded to leave Jerusalem, for it is about to be destroyed.
2. Lehi receives a command that his sons (not himself) should go back and retrieve the plates of brass.
3. Nephi and Sam were ready and worthy, but Laman and Lemuel were not, yet all went up.
4. They cast lots to see who should simply go in and ask Laban, and the lot fell on Laman, the oldest—he went in and failed.
5. Nephi suggested "selling all they own" in an attempt to get the plates of brass; they are refused and Laban tries to kill them.
6. Laman and Lemuel beat Nephi and Sam in anger.
7. An angel shows up, separates them, and Nephi alone goes back into the city.
8. Nephi, led by the Spirit, goes into the city, kills Laban, and claims the brass plates.
9. In the process, Nephi also "frees slaves" who join him.
10. Later, Lehi is told to send his sons back again, this time for wives.

Now that we are familiar with the Marvelous Work and Wonder, there are many I'm sure, having read through this, who will pick up on the type and theme immediately... Once again brothers and sisters, let me give my testimony, that I am absolutely sure that these stories were included in the Book of Mormon entirely as types to prepare our minds and hearts singularly for the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem...

1. The people of God are commanded to leave Babylon, for it is about to be destroyed, and flee to Zion.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country. The people of the Lord, those who have complied with the requirements of the new covenant, have already commenced gathering together to Zion, which is in the state of Missouri; therefore I declare unto you the warning which the Lord has commanded me to declare unto this generation, remembering that the eyes of my Maker are upon me, and that to Him I am accountable for every word I say, wishing nothing worse to my fellowmen than their eternal salvation; therefore, "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come." Repent ye, repent ye, and embrace the everlasting covenant, and flee to Zion, before the

overflowing scourge overtake you, for there are those now living upon the earth whose eyes shall not be closed in death until they see all these things, which I have spoken, fulfilled. Remember these things; call upon the Lord while He is near, and seek Him while He may be found, is the exhortation of your unworthy servant.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 17)

2. The people of God go to Jackson County in an attempt to take possession of the land.
3. Some of the Saints of God were ready, others were not, yet both went up together.
4. And this older generation failed.

**Doctrine and Covenants 63:24–31,41. "They should assemble themselves together unto the land of Zion, not in haste"**

To manage the number of Saints gathering to Zion, Church leaders required those in Ohio desiring to go to Missouri to obtain a Church-issued certificate before they could migrate and participate in the law of consecration in Missouri. ***However, many enthusiastic members disregarded the instruction and went to Missouri in large numbers.***

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (2018))

5. Now the Saints attempt to simply "buy everything up" over time, but that, too, fails.

**Doctrine and Covenants 63:24–31,41. "They should assemble themselves together unto the land of Zion, not in haste"**

A Church historian appointed by the Prophet Joseph Smith later wrote, "The church immediately began to gather in Jackson County, and on this subject they became quite enthusiastic. They had been commanded not to go up in haste, nor by flight, but to have all things prepared before them. Money was to be sent up to the bishop, and as fast as lands were purchased, and preparations made, the bishop was to let it be known, that the church might be gathered in. But this regulation was not attended to, for the church got crazy to go up to Zion, as it was then called. The rich were afraid to send up their money to purchase lands, and the poor crowded up in numbers, without having any places provided, contrary to the advice of the bishop and others, until the old citizens began to be highly displeased" (John Corrill, *A Brief History of the Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints* [1839], 18–19, josephsmithpapers.org; see also *The Joseph Smith Papers, Histories, Volume 2: Assigned Histories,* 1831–1847, ed. Karen Lynn Davidson and others [2012], 146)."

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (2018))

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

**65** And with one heart and with one mind, gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you.

**Doctrine and Covenants 48**

**2** And inasmuch as ye have lands, ye shall impart to the eastern brethren;

**3** And inasmuch as ye have not lands, let them buy for the present time in those regions round about, as seemeth them good, for it must needs be necessary that they have places to live for the present time.

**4** It must needs be necessary that ye save all the money that ye can, and that ye obtain all that ye can in righteousness, that in time ye may be enabled to purchase land for an inheritance, even the city.

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**68** Nevertheless, as I have said unto you in a former commandment, let not your gathering be in haste, nor by flight; but let all things be prepared before you.

**69** And in order that all things be prepared before you, observe the commandment which I have given concerning these things—

**70** Which saith, or teacheth, to purchase all the lands with money, which can be purchased for money, in the region round about the land which I have appointed to be the land of Zion, for the beginning of the gathering of my saints;

**71** All the land which can be purchased in Jackson county, and the counties round about, and leave the residue in mine hand.

**72** Now, verily I say unto you, let all the churches gather together all their moneys; let these things be done in their time, but not in haste; and observe to have all things prepared before you.

**73** And let honorable men be appointed, even wise men, and send them to purchase these lands.

**74** And the churches in the eastern countries, when they are built up, if they will hearken unto this counsel they may buy lands and gather together upon them; and in this way they may establish Zion.

**75** There is even now already in store sufficient, yea, even an abundance, to redeem Zion, and establish her waste places, no more to be thrown down, were the churches, who call themselves after my name, willing to hearken to my voice.

**Missouri Executive Order 44**

(Known as the Mormon Extermination Order) was a state executive order issued by Missouri Governor Lilburn Boggs on October 27, 1838…

Governor Boggs directed that "the Mormons must be treated as enemies, and must be exterminated or driven from the State if necessary for the public peace—their outrages are beyond all description."

The militia and other state authorities—General John Bullock Clark, among them—used the executive order which led to the massacre, rape, and violent expulsion of the Mormons from their lands in the state following their capitulation—and surrender of their weapons—which in turn led to their forced migration to Nauvoo, Illinois.

(*Wikipedia,* "Missouri Executive Order 44")

6. Many "saints" apostatize from the Church at this time… the wheat and the tares grow together…

**Luke 12**

**45** But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; ***and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;***

**46** The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

7. Angels come and separate the righteous from the wicked, and the righteous ***and*** prepared from the unprepared (Nephi vs. Sam), and the Redemption of Zion "by blood" takes place.
8. Angels and Men in the Redemption of Zion kill all those that stand in their way and obtain the promise.

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**55** And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are

of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;

**56** And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard; for it is mine; ***I have bought it with money.***

**57** Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; ***break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen.***

**58** ***And inasmuch as they gather together against you, avenge me of mine enemies,*** that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land.

**Doctrine and Covenants 58**

**51** And an epistle and subscription, to be presented unto all the churches to obtain moneys, to be put into the hands of the bishop, of himself or the agent, as seemeth him good or as he shall direct, to purchase lands for an inheritance for the children of God.

**52** For, behold, verily I say unto you, the Lord willeth that the disciples and the children of men should open their hearts, even to purchase this whole region of country, as soon as time will permit.

**53** Behold, here is wisdom. Let them do this lest they receive none inheritance, ***save it be by the shedding of blood.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 63**

**25** Behold, the land of Zion—I, the Lord, hold it in mine own hands;

**26** Nevertheless, I, the Lord, render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's.

**27** Wherefore, I the Lord will that you should purchase the lands, that you may have advantage of the world, that you may have claim on the world, that they may not be stirred up unto anger.

**28** For Satan putteth it into their hearts to anger against you, and to the shedding of blood.

**29** Wherefore, the land of Zion shall not be obtained but by purchase ***or by blood,*** otherwise there is none inheritance for you.

**30** And if by purchase, behold you are blessed;

**31** And if by blood, as you are forbidden to shed blood, lo, your enemies are upon you, and ye shall be scourged from city to city, and from synagogue to synagogue, ***and but few shall stand to receive an inheritance.***

**32** I, the Lord, am angry with the wicked; I am holding my Spirit from the inhabitants of the earth.

**33** I have sworn in my wrath, and decreed wars upon the face of the earth, and the wicked shall slay the wicked, and fear shall come upon every man;

**34** ***And the saints also shall hardly escape; nevertheless, I, the Lord, am with them, and will come down in heaven from the presence of my Father and consume the wicked with unquenchable fire.***

**35** ***And behold, this is not yet, but by and by.***

**36** Wherefore, seeing that I, the Lord, have decreed all these things upon the face of the earth, I will that my saints should be assembled upon the land of Zion;

**37** And that every man should take righteousness in his hands and faithfulness upon his loins, and lift a warning voice unto the inhabitants of the earth; and declare both by word ***and by flight*** that desolation shall come upon the wicked.

9. Slaves rise against masters, and the captives are delivered (D&C 87:4–6; 2 Nephi 6:16).
10. Due to the nature of the bloodshed and war, seven women will take hold of one man (Isaiah 4: 1).

Once again, is the type not clear enough? Are the scriptures not laid bare?

## The Brother of Jared (Ether 2–4)

1. The Brother of Jared and His people are led by the Lord in a cloud towards the promised land—the Lord "had sworn in his wrath" that only the righteous would dwell thereon or would be "swept from the land."
2. On the way to the promised land, they reach the "great sea that divided the lands" and pitched their tents in the shore for the space of four years
3. The Lord came and rebuked the Brother of Jared for falling asleep on the job and not continuing on the journey towards the promised land—they repent and the Lord forgives them on the condition that they don't fall back asleep and promises them land inheritances
4. The Brother of Jared and his people go about building barges and do all they can temporally to prepare themselves for the journey to the promised land, but require "light" and power to cross the waters
5. The Lord doesn't give the Brother of Jared the answer to his question about how to light the ships because it is already recorded in the scriptural story of Noah—the Brother of Jared has to have "faith as the Brother of Jared" and the Lord blesses him with his power, as well as a personal visitation
6. The people of Jared depart in their ships towards the promised land where they will receive their inheritance

So once again, let us unite this with our understanding of The Marvelous Work and Wonder and see if we can open the eyes of our understanding:

1. The Lord commands us to flee to Utah, so as to prepare us and endow us with power so that we can obtain our land of promise in Jackson County Missouri, the New Jerusalem. The Lord swears in his wrath that those who pollute their inheritance shall be cut off and swept from the land.

**Doctrine and Covenants 103**

**11** But verily I say unto you, I have decreed that your brethren which have been scattered shall return to the lands of their inheritances, and shall build up the waste places of Zion.

**12** For after much tribulation, as I have said unto you in a former commandment, cometh the blessing.

**13** Behold, this is the blessing which I have promised after your tribulations, and the tribulations of your brethren—your redemption, and the redemption of your brethren, even their restoration to the land of Zion, to be established, no more to be thrown down.

**14** Nevertheless, if they pollute their inheritances they shall be thrown down; for I will not spare them if they pollute their inheritances.

**15** Behold, I say unto you, the redemption of Zion must needs come by power

**Doctrine and Covenants 105**

**9** Therefore, in consequence of the transgressions of my people, it is expedient in me that mine elders should wait for a little season for the redemption of Zion—

**10** That they themselves may be prepared, and that my people may be taught more perfectly, and have experience, and know more perfectly concerning their duty, and the things which I require at their hands.

**11** And this cannot be brought to pass until mine elders are endowed with power from on high.

**12** For behold, I have prepared a great endowment and blessing to be poured out upon them, inasmuch as they are faithful and continue in humility before me.

**13** Therefore it is expedient in me that mine elders should wait for a little season, for the redemption of Zion.

**14** For behold, I do not require at their hands to fight the battles of Zion; for, as I said in a former commandment, even so will I fulfil—I will fight your battles.

2. Once in the Salt Lake Valley, the people of the Lord "fall asleep" for many years.

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**47** And while they were yet laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves: And what need hath my lord of this tower?

**48** And consulted for a long time, saying among themselves: What need hath my lord of this tower, seeing this is a time of peace?

**49** Might not this money be given to the exchangers? For there is no need of these things.

**50** And while they were at variance one with another they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord.

3. The Lord wakes up the "Joseph's Boys" and makes them promises, on the condition that they don't go back asleep on the beach, else they pollute their inheritance.

**Revelation 2**

**4** Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, ***because thou hast left thy first love.***

**5** ***Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place,*** except thou repent.

**Heber C. Kimball**

Take the boys here, the sons of our brethren and sisters, and you may cut them into inch pieces, and they will not forsake this cause, but they will defend it to the last. Some of them may be rough, and perhaps some of them do not pray much, but send them into the vineyard, and then you will see them shew forth the power that is in them. At present the Prophet Joseph's boys lay apparently in a state of slumber, everything seems to be perfectly calm with them, but by and by God will wake them up, and they will roar like the thunders of Mount Sinai.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 4, Discourse 1)

4. The people of the Lord go about filling their lamps with oil, and trimming their lamps, temporally preparing for the journey ahead, but they still lack "the power."
5. The "power of the Lamb" descends upon the covenant people of the Lord (1 Nephi 14) as they have faith as the Brother of Jared, by "looking to the rock from whence they were hewn" (Isaiah 51).
6. The Lord sends "righteousness and light" down from heaven to preserve his people via the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem (Moses 7: 61–62).

## Jesus Christ's Birth

Does even the Savior's birth and early childhood represent a type for the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem in the latter-days! You better believe it...

**Luke 2**

**25** And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

**26** ***And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.***

**27** And ***he came by the Spirit into the temple:*** and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

**28** Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

**29** Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, ***according to thy word:***

**30** ***For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,***

**31** Which ***thou hast prepared*** before the face of all people;

**32** A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

**33** And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

**34** And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; ***and for a sign which shall be spoken against;***

**35** (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

**36** And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: ***she was of a great age,*** and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

**37** And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

**38** And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked ***for redemption*** in Jerusalem.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Now I understand by this quotation, that God clearly manifested to Enoch ***the redemption which He prepared*** [verses 30–31 above], by offering the Messiah as a Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world; ***and by virtue of the same,*** the glorious resurrection of the Savior, and the resurrection of all the human family, even a resurrection of their corporeal bodies, is brought to pass; and also righteousness and truth are to sweep the earth as with a flood. And now, I ask, how righteousness and truth are going to sweep the earth as with a flood? I will answer. ***Men and angels are to be co-workers in bringing to pass this great work, and Zion is to be prepared, even a new Jerusalem,*** for the elect that are to be gathered from the four quarters of the earth, and to be established an holy city, for the tabernacle of the Lord shall be with them.

("Righteousness to Sweep the Earth," *TPJS,* p. 83)

Simeon is "the type and shadow" for this "rising generation" of which the Prophet Joseph Smith Jr. Identified.

**Luke 2**

**6** And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

**7** And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

**8** And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

**9** And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

**10** And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

**11** For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

**12** And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

**13** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

**14** Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

**15** And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

**16** And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

**17** And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

The shepherds, those "watching over the flock by night," the "watchmen," go hand in hand with angels and witness the birth of "the child." This also continues the type...

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**12** And in that day all who are found upon ***the watch-tower,*** or in other words, all mine Israel, shall be saved.

**13** And they that have been scattered shall be gathered.

**Luke 12**

**37** Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh ***shall find watching:*** verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

**38** And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

**39** And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

**40** Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

**41** ¶ Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

**42** And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, ***to give them their portion of meat in due season?***

**43** Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh ***shall find so doing.***

**44** Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

**Revelation 12**

**1** And there appeared a great sign in heaven in the likeness of things on the earth; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

**2** And the ***woman being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.***

**3** And ***she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and his throne.***

**9** And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, ***and the kingdom of our God,*** and the power of his Christ:

**10** For the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

**11** For they have overcome him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; for they loved not their own lives, but kept the testimony even unto death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and ye that dwell in them.

**12** And after these things, I heard another voice saying, Woe to the inhabiters of the earth, yea, and they who dwell upon the islands of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

**13** For when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, ***he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.***

**14** ***Therefore to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might flee into the wilderness, into her place,*** where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

The Christ child is the City, the New Jerusalem. Them fleeing into Egypt also continues the type...

**Matthew 2**

**1** Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, ***there came wise men from the east*** to Jerusalem,

**2** Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? ***for we have seen his star in the east,*** and are come to worship him.

**3** When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

**9** When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, ***the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.***

**10** When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

**11** ¶ And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, ***and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.***

**12** And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

**13** And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, ***Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt,*** and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

**14** When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:

**15** And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

**16** ¶ Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, ***from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.***

Wise men come and visit the child (i.e., "the New Jerusalem") ***two years*** from his birth, the king shuts his mouth and considers things he has not before...

They are led by "a star" (pillar/cloud) until they came to the child... fell down at his feet, and sang with joy giving their gifts... these all continue the type with the Lost Ten Tribes returning on "the ways" to the New Jerusalem ***two years*** after it's birth and following "a star"...

**3 Nephi 21**

**8** And when that day shall come, it shall come to pass that kings shall shut their mouths; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

**9** For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and a marvelous work among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them.

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

> **92** And angels shall fly through the midst of heaven, crying with a loud voice, sounding the trump of God, saying: Prepare ye, prepare ye, O inhabitants of the earth; for the judgment of our God is come. Behold, and lo, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.
>
> **93** And immediately there shall appear a great sign in heaven, and all people shall see it together.

**Doctrine and Covenants 133**

> **25** And the Lord, even the Savior, shall stand in the midst of his people, and shall reign over all flesh.
>
> **26** And they who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord; and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves; and they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence.
>
> **27** And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep.
>
> **28** Their enemies shall become a prey unto them,
>
> **29** And in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water; and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land.
>
> **30** And they shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim, my servants.
>
> **31** And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence.
>
> **32** And there shall they fall down and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim.
>
> **33** And they shall be filled with songs of everlasting joy.
>
> **34** Behold, this is the blessing of the everlasting God upon the tribes of Israel, and the richer blessing upon the head of Ephraim and his fellows.

It is all right there... Jesus Christ and His birth is a type and shadow for the Redemption of Zion, building of New Jerusalem, and the return of the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel. And right now, in our time, we are dealing with "Simeon and shepherds," i.e., "that rising generation and the watchmen." Period. Time's up! We are "at delivery," and soon "the child" will be with us...

## Children of Israel

There are so many similarities and types in this as well, that it could fill an entire chapter itself. But for the sake of time, let's hit on some of the major themes:

1. Pestilence, plague, wrath
2. "Moses" as a type
3. Parting of the Red Sea, pillar of fire protecting them
4. Unable to enter the promised land because the older generation lacked faith and preparation.
5. Wandered around outside the promised land for 40 years, many wondering if they ever were going to get there, some leaving, others possibly even teaching the promised land had moved, etc.
6. Moses was taken from the people, and did not make his return until the Mt of Transfiguration in the promised land with Christ
7. Joshua redeems the promised land through miracles—the Lord fights their battles

Hopefully we have read enough pestilence, plague, famine, and wrath quotes to understand how that fits into the prophetic picture, so let us skip to the next point:

**Doctrine and Covenants 103**

> **15** Behold, I say unto you, the redemption of Zion must needs come by power;
>
> **16** Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel.
>
> **17** For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ye must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm.
>
> **18** And as your fathers were led at the first, even so shall the redemption of Zion be.
>
> **19** Therefore, let not your hearts faint, for I say not unto you as I said unto your fathers: Mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence.
>
> **20** But I say unto you: Mine angels shall go up before you, and also my presence, and in time ye shall possess the goodly land.
>
> **21** Verily, verily I say unto you, that my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., is the man to whom I likened the servant to whom the Lord of the vineyard spake in the parable which I have given unto you.
>
> **22** Therefore let my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., say unto the strength of my house, my young men and the middle aged—Gather yourselves together unto the land of Zion, upon the land which I have bought with money that has been consecrated unto me.
>
> **23** And let all the churches send up wise men with their moneys, and purchase lands even as I have commanded them.
>
> **24** And inasmuch as mine enemies come against you to drive you from my goodly land, which I have consecrated to be the land of Zion, even from your own lands after these testimonies, which ye have brought before me against them, ye shall curse them;
>
> **25** And whomsoever ye curse, I will curse, and ye shall avenge me of mine enemies.
>
> **26** And my presence shall be with you even in avenging me of mine enemies, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.

**2 Nephi 27**

> **23** For behold, I am God; and I am a God of miracles; and I will show unto the world that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever; and I work not among the children of men save it be according to their faith.
>
> **24** And again it shall come to pass that the Lord shall say unto him that shall read the words that shall be delivered him:
>
> **25** Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men—
>
> **26** Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, ***for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.***

**1 Nephi 22**

> **17** Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, ***they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire.***

**Isaiah 35** (Doctrine and Covenants 133)

> **7** And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.
>
> **8** And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

> **9** No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there:
>
> **10** And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

**Jeremiah 16**

> **14** ¶ Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;
>
> **15** But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.
>
> **16** ¶ Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

**2 Nephi 20**

> **25** For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.
>
> **26** And the Lord of Hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb; and as his rod was upon the sea so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.
>
> **27** And it shall come to pass in that day that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.

## Abinadi

Before I begin this, one must take a step back and see the macro to understand the peculiarity of this story. Mormon, the prophet historian who was abridging the account of his people—much like Nephi and Moroni, etc.—was shown our day and the things that would transpire in our day, as we went over at the start of this chapter. However, Mormon, in his abridgement, says:

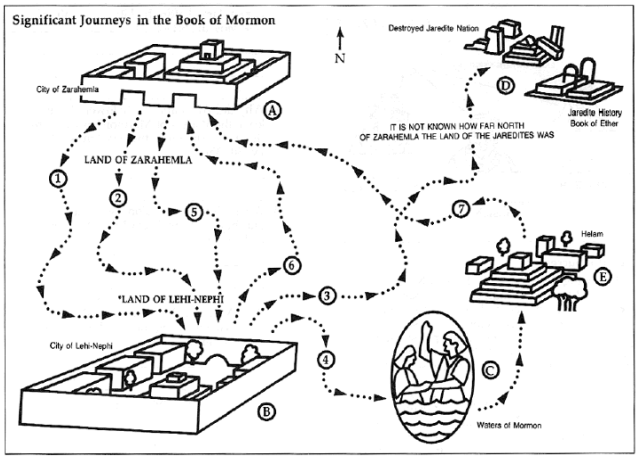
**3 Nephi 7**

> **17** … and all of them cannot be written, and a part of them would not suffice, therefore they are not written in this book.

So we know that Mormon has the task of picking out the most important things and he has an overabundance of material to work with! Yet, the account of Abinadi on the other hand, the records of it and surrounding it, ***were extremely sparse.*** In fact, if it wasn't for Alma writing the words of Abinadi we would not have ***any*** of that part of the story! Limhi also only had ***a single record*** of the account of his people from the time they left Zarahemla to the time they came back. Not only are the records sparse, and not only does Mormon include all of them, he includes all the records ***from both groups*** (Limhi and Alma) comprising a surprisingly large chunk of chapters, basically the entire book of Mosiah (while at the same time we learn very little about what is transpiring in the city of Zarahemla, which is, from a narrative point of view, the main story line). So clearly, there was obviously something that Mormon saw in this story that made him go, "Wow, this story is exactly like what I saw happening in the future!" and he included it all.

With that in mind, understand that I will not be going through 20 chapters of scripture—this will simply be a macro level breakdown of the type. I'd recommend re-reading these chapters in Mosiah for further study and parallels.

Looking at the following image, let us break down the macro story line before getting into the scriptures and their parallels.




*From the Book of Mormon Student Manual*

Lehi and his family landed in the promised land and the land that they first inhabited was known as the land of first inheritance. Nephi fled after his father's death, and formed the city of Nephi. Many years later the people of the city of Nephi fled its borders and were led to the city of Zarahemla. After which:

1. A group left the city of Zarahemla to go back to reclaim their old city of Nephi. They never made it there as the group ended up killing each other and the survivors returned to Zarahemla.

2. i. The group replenishes their numbers and leave again to inhabit the city of Nephi.
   ii. Once they arrive there, they end up having what we would call a revolutionary war, which was almost entirely over taxation. The people of the city of Nephi win their independence.
   iii. The people become wicked.
   iv. Abinadi the prophet comes to warn them and is rejected.
   v. Abinadi sometime later (two years) comes back but this time works secretly and in disguise.
   vi. Abinadi is called into the courts of the people of Nephi in front of the king.
   vii. Abinadi is rejected. Alma the elder is converted. Abinadi says that he is a type and what they do to him is also a type and then they (scourge) burn him.

3. i. Alma with the righteous remnant leave the city of Nephi to go to the wilderness where the true church of God is restored. They dwelt in tents.
   ii. Those that remained in the city of Nephi fell into bondage, and their king was slain.

4. i. (These two numbers on the image are actually backwards.) King Limhi sent the expedition looking for help—he does not find help but he finds a desolate city with records.
   ii. The city of Nephi also looks for the people of Alma, the righteous remnant, but they have disappeared. We learn that they go and form the city of Helam, which means "stronghold or place of abundance," a Hebrew word with striking resemblance to "Salem."
   iii. The inhabitants of the city of Nephi try to fight for their independence in a series of 3 battles in which the people of Nephi are slaughtered consecutively. This is a period of great tribulation and great losses.

5. Ammon and his brethren (not Ammon the son of Mosiah) are sent down to find what had happened to the people who had left the city of Zarahemla all those years ago (point 2 i). They pitch their tents

on the hill named Shilom (which name shares identical meaning to Salem: Peace).

6. Through great repentance and turning back to the Lord, those that were left alive in the city of Nephi eventually escape through the help and aid of Ammon and his brethren.
7. Alma and the righteous remnant have to go through some trials of their own but they pale in comparison to the trials that the people of the city of Nephi had to go through. As far as we know, not a single member of Alma's group was lost and the burdens that were placed upon their backs became so light (because of the Lord) that "they could not feel them upon their backs." The Lord miraculously delivered the people of Alma, stopping the pursuing army in a valley.

So, let's go through each of these points and see if we can see some foreshadowing/types dealing with The Marvelous Work and Wonder.

1. A group left the city of Zarahemla to go back to reclaim their old city of Nephi. They never made it there as the group ended up killing each other, and the survivors returned to Zarahemla.

This group of Nephites attempted to reclaim their ancient homeland but failed to do so, because when they arrived, the dispute arose between slaughtering the inhabitants in a surprise attack or working out a treaty with them. This broke into an inter-party conflict that saw most of them destroyed, and the remainder of them left back to Zarahemla. (Mosiah 9:1–2).

The parallel is that of Ephraim wanting to once again inherit the land of their inheritance, which would be America. There were many failed attempts including Vikings that actually landed and set up a settlement but then broke into civil conflict between each other and were forced to pull up stakes and return back to Scandinavia.

2. i. The group replenishes their numbers and leave again to inhabit the city of Nephi.

Zeniff is "overzealous to inherit the land of his fathers." Their people suffered famine and sore afflictions on the regaining of their land and only regained the land fully when they made deals, treaties, etc. with the king (Mosiah 9:3–13).

The parallel to this is: Christopher Columbus was wrought upon by the Holy Ghost (as the Book of Mormon says) and became overzealous to sail. The only way the Pilgrims and settlers gained a foothold or validity is through the king of England. But much like wicked King Laman, the king of England allowed it to happen for nefarious reasons. He wanted to tax the American colonies and bring them into bondage "that they might glut themselves with the labors of the colonists' hands, and that they might feast themselves upon the flocks of their fields."

2. ii. Once they arrive there, they end up having what we would call a revolutionary war, which was almost entirely over taxation. The people of the city of Nephi win their independence.

The people of Nephi fight a revolutionary war against the king based almost entirely over taxation, and they did win the war (Mosiah 9:14–19, Mosiah 10:1–5). The parallel would be the American colonists fighting a revolutionary war against the vastly superior aggressive army (British).

Bonus point: the Lamanites swoop around and attempt to take the kingdom from the north and are ultimately beaten. The parallel would be the British returning and allying themselves with the French colonists (Canada was not established yet) and trying to attack the newly-formed America from the north, ultimately failing (Mosiah 10:6–10, 19–22).

2. iii. The people become wicked.

The Nephites become wicked (Mosiah 10:11–18, Mosiah 11:1–19). The parallel: Neglect of the tower, people become slothful, etc.

2. iv. Abinadi the prophet comes to warn them and is rejected.

Abinadi shows up and is rejected (Mosiah 11:20–29). The parallel to this is Joseph Smith.

2. v. Abinadi sometime later (two years) comes back but this time works secretly and in disguise.

After the space of two years, Abinadi returns, but he "came among them in disguise, that they knew him not" (Mosiah 12:1). Abinadi calls down warnings against "this generation."

**Mosiah 12**

> **4** And it shall come to pass that I will smite this my people with sore afflictions, yea, with famine and with pestilence; and I will cause that they shall howl all the day long.
>
> **5** Yea, and I will cause that they shall have burdens lashed upon their backs; and they shall be driven before like a dumb ass.
>
> **6** And it shall come to pass that I will send forth hail among them, and it shall smite them; and they shall also be smitten with the east wind; and insects shall pester their land also, and devour their grain.
>
> **7** And they shall be smitten with a great pestilence—and all this will I do because of their iniquities and abominations.
>
> **8** And it shall come to pass that except they repent I will utterly destroy them from off the face of the earth; yet they shall leave a record behind them, and I will preserve them for other nations which shall possess the land; yea, even this will I do that I may discover the abominations of this people to other nations. And many things did Abinadi prophesy against this people.

The parallel is that when Joseph Smith returns he will work discreetly and prudently for some time. We just celebrated the 200th anniversary of the First Vision. The warnings and consequences called down upon the generation including famine, hail etc. are exactly the same as what Joseph Smith will call down upon us of this generation. Verse 8 has reference to the secret dark acts that Joseph will also bring to light (discussed in detail in Alma 37).

2. vi. Abinadi is called into the courts of the people of Nephi in front of the king.

Abinadi is carried before the king, and a large section of what Abinadi preaches is the 10 commandments (Mosiah 12:9–13:24). One of the very first things he goes into is Zion and the New Jerusalem (quoting Isaiah; Mosiah 12:20–24). Abinadi rebukes the priests and says, "[Ye] pretend … to understand the spirit of prophesying, … ye have perverted the ways of the Lord. Ye have not applied your hearts to understanding; therefore, ye have not been wise" (Mosiah 12:25–27). Abinadi finishes his message saying that "what you do with me, after this, shall be as a type and a shadow of things which are to come" (Mosiah 13:10). He then talks about the "law given them" (Mosiah 13:30) and says, "Behold, I say unto you, that all these things were types of things to come" (Mosiah 13:31). "And now, did they understand the law? I say unto you, Nay, they did not all understand the law; and this because of the hardness of their hearts" (Mosiah 13:32). He then quotes Isaiah 53 and teaches about the coming of the Savior (Mosiah 14–16).

The parallels to this are: being called into the courts of Washington, as well as all of the things that Joseph Smith will be doing, prophesying, and warning of. We learn in 3 Nephi 24 and 25 the things that Joseph Smith ("my messenger") will be bringing up in the courts of Washington. Among them being 3 Nephi 25:4, the 10 commandments, which is exactly what Abinadi did here. We also know that "the pit digged for thee" will be filled by the diggers themselves during this time period, or "no weapon formed against thee shall prosper" (1 Nephi 14:3). One of the things that Joseph will warn the courts of Washington of is that the weapons that they design, or the pits that they will try to dig for the people of God, will be filled by those who dug them.

Abinadi says that the reason why they don't understand the law is because of the hardness of their hearts, and they understood not because "they did not apply their hearts to understanding, therefore they are not wise" (Mosiah 12:27). The same thing will happen with Celestial Law—people will harden their hearts and not seek understanding. In the courts of Washington, we learn from Isaiah, they will say to not trust treaties because they will fail. Instead, they should trust in New Jerusalem, Zion, and the return of the 10 tribes in preparation for the Lord's second coming—all of which Abinadi mentioned (save for the fact that Abinadi was referencing the Lord's first coming, and this will be referencing the Lord's second coming, but that is how types work). Abinadi also says that one of the big quantifiers would be between those who understood the spirit of prophecy and those who did not.

Joseph Smith made the exact same prediction (via "Steamboat dream"): "I said to my friends that if they did not understand the signs of the times and the spirit of prophecy, they would be apt to be lost. It was but a few moments after when we saw the waves break over the boat, and she soon foundered and went down with all on board."

2. vii. Abinadi is rejected. Alma the elder is converted. Abinadi says that he is a type and what they do to him is also a type and then they (scourge) burn him.

Abinadi is sentenced to death; Alma is converted and flees. Abinadi is put to death, "and it came to pass that they took him and bound him, and scourged his skin with faggots, yea, even unto death" (Mosiah 17:13). The parallel to this would be that Joseph Smith did die on his first attempt, and the courts in Washington might very well reject his message and the Church a second time, the Church being sentenced and then "scourged" by the Assyrian, which is already in the land. Alma then begins to go about the people in secret, teaching the words of Abinadi (Mosiah 18:1–3). Once again, creating a dualistic nature with Joseph Smith dying and then coming back and working in secret.

3. i. Alma with the righteous remnant leave the city of Nephi to go to the wilderness where the true church of God is restored. They dwelt in tents.

The law of consecration is also reinstated. There were only 450 souls in the group (Mosiah 18:35). The parallel: "Every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety" (D&C 45:68). This is the parable of the 10 virgins as well as the restoration of Celestial Law. 450 people is not a lot of people. We learn from the 10 virgins that only 50% of the righteous will be ready.

3. ii. Those that remained in the city of Nephi fell into bondage and their king was slain

The people of the city of Nephi fall into a civil war, and while they are in the civil war, foreign invaders break their treaty and enter the land and put the people in bondage (Mosiah 19). The parallel: America is to break into civil war, and, depending on which prophecies you accept as prophecies or not, we know that parts of America will possibly be invaded by foreign invaders; at the very least, the Assyrian will be in full swing. The prophets, when they are called into the courts of Washington, will say that all the treaties now signed will break down. The same thing happened for the people of Nephi, and the same thing will happen when they ignore Joseph/the Church when they are called into Washington.

4. i. King Limhi sent the expedition looking for help—he does not find help but he finds a desolate city with records.

ii. The city of Nephi also looks for the people of Alma, the righteous remnant, but they have disappeared. We learn that they go and form the city of Helam, which means "stronghold or place of abundance," a Hebrew word with striking resemblance to "Salem"

They now wish to be members of God's church, but the only person who has the keys to make them members is Alma with his group, who they can't find. (Mosiah 8:7–11, Mosiah 21:25–35)

The parallels here: Once again, this is the parable of the 10 virgins, wheat and the tares etc. The Church of God here is the Church of the Firstborn of which only Joseph has the keys for. This also has strong ties to the redemption and building of New Jerusalem. Also, cities in America will be made desolate and people calling for aid from other cities might find "cities of bones." (See John Taylor's dream, in Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 6/15/1878, "A Vision, Salt Lake City, Night of Dec 16, 1877.")

4. iii. The inhabitants of the city of Nephi try to fight for their independence in a series of 3 battles in which the people of Nephi are slaughtered consecutively. This is a period of great tribulation and great losses.

Mosiah 20:6–12.

Parallels: see Isaiah 3:25–26, this is the civil war—if you didn't flee to Zion you must take up your sword to fight against your neighbor. And for members of the church, your losses will be more severe because the Lord expected more from you.

**Isaiah 3**

> **25** Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war.
>
> **26** And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground.

5. Ammon and his brethren (not Ammon the son of Mosiah) are sent down to find what had happened to the people who had left the city of Zarahemla all those years ago (point 2 i). They pitch their tents on the hill named Shilom (which name shares identical meaning to Salem: Peace)

Mosiah 21:23–24, Mosiah 7, Mosiah 8:1–6.

It is interesting to note that Ammon and his brethren did not have the priesthood authority, even though they were the ones doing the saving. We know that the returned 10 tribes will not have the higher ordinances when they return, they will be receiving them at the hands of Ephraim, or in this case Alma/Joseph Smith.

6. Through great repentance and turning back to the Lord, those that were left alive in the city of Nephi eventually escape through the help and aid of Ammon and his brethren.

Mosiah 22.

Parallels: Much like the point above, there will be much tribulation, and through the great tribulation, the Saints will be made ready to "escape the world." In Isaiah, as well as Jeremiah, the Lord makes reference to saving the "ransomed of the Lord," people in bondage. The question asked is: "Shall the prey be delivered from the terrible?" and the Lord's response is, "Yea." This might even be how the 10 tribes themselves come forth.

7. Alma and the righteous remnant have to go through some trials of their own, but they pale in comparison to the trials that the people of the city of Nephi had to go through. As far as we know, not a single member of Alma's group was lost and the burdens that were placed upon their backs became so light (because of the Lord) that "they could not feel them upon their backs." The Lord miraculously delivered the people of Alma, stopping the pursuing army in a valley.

Mosiah 23, Mosiah 24.

Parallels: Those who are ready and heed the call of the Prophet Joseph Smith will be gathered out. Joseph Smith clarified that there will be angels gathering people out. Angels are simply resurrected beings, meaning that Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, etc. would be considered angels, gathering the wheat into the barn before the time of burning. Remember, Joseph Smith specified that our deceased ancestors will be the ones spearheading this. These people separated will have to go through trials and troubles, but due to their personal preparedness and worthiness, they have to go through far less. Nephi (as well as many other prophets) spoke of that time period and said the Lord would protect his righteous remnant even if it had to "be as by fire" (1 Ne. 22:17). This is where the pillar of fire comes in. Eventually, when the 144,000 are sent out, ***those that remain and are worthy*** will be brought into the program.

## Rainbow

Not so much "a type" as the rest, this one needs to be addressed simply on the grounds that "all things point to the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem," and people are blind to the prophecies!

Is there a story more overlooked and taught incorrectly than Noah? Hard to think of many...

1. There wasn't "two of every animal" (Gen 7: 1–7)
2. The Lord himself actually was who shut the door to the ark (Gen 7: 16)

There are a few others, but let me skip ahead to the most important of all for this chapter

3. The bow in the heavens was ***not*** a sign dealing primarily with the Lord promising never to flood the earth again

Wait...?! ***What?!*** You heard me... This has and continues to be taught incorrectly!

**JST, Genesis 9**

**17** And I will establish my ***covenant*** with you, which I made unto Enoch, concerning the ***remnants*** of your posterity.

**18** And ***God made a covenant with Noah and said, This shall be the token of the covenant*** I make between me and you, and for every living creature with you, for perpetual generations:

**19** ***I will set my bow in the cloud; and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.***

**20** And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud; and ***I will remember my covenant, which I have made between me and you,*** for every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

**21** And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, ***that I may remember the everlasting covenant, which I made unto thy father Enoch, that, when men should keep all my commandments, Zion should again come on the earth, the city of Enoch, which I have caught up unto myself.***

**22** And ***this is mine everlasting covenant: that when thy posterity shall embrace the truth and look upward, then shall Zion look downward, and all the heavens shall shake with gladness, and the earth shall tremble with joy;***

**23** ***And the general assembly of the church of the firstborn shall come down out of heaven, and possess the earth, and shall have place until the end come. And this is mine everlasting covenant, which I made with thy father Enoch.***

**24** And the bow shall be in the cloud, and I will establish my covenant unto thee, which I have made between me and thee, for every living creature of all flesh that shall be upon the earth.

**25** And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and thee, for all flesh that shall be upon the earth.

**Moses 7**

**49** And when Enoch heard the earth mourn, he wept, and cried unto the Lord, saying: O Lord, wilt thou not have compassion upon the earth? ***Wilt thou not bless the children of Noah?***

**50** And it came to pass that Enoch continued his cry unto the Lord, saying: I ask thee, O Lord, in the name of thine Only Begotten, even Jesus Christ, ***that thou wilt have mercy upon Noah and his seed, that the earth might never more be covered by the floods.***

**51** And the Lord could not withhold; and he covenanted with Enoch, and sware unto him with an oath, that he would stay the floods; that he would call upon the children of Noah;

**52** And he sent forth an unalterable decree, that a remnant of his seed should always be found among all nations, while the earth should stand;

**53** And the Lord said: Blessed is he through whose seed Messiah shall come; for he saith—I am Messiah, ***the King of Zion, the Rock of Heaven,*** which is broad as eternity; whoso cometh in at the gate and climbeth up by me shall never fall; wherefore, ***blessed are they of whom I have spoken, for they shall come forth with songs of everlasting joy.***

**54** And it came to pass that Enoch cried unto the Lord, saying: When the Son of Man cometh in the flesh, shall the earth rest? I pray thee, show me these things.

**55** And the Lord said unto Enoch: Look, and he looked and beheld the Son of Man lifted up on the cross, after the manner of men;

**56** And he heard a loud voice; and the heavens were veiled; and all the creations of God mourned; and the earth groaned; and the rocks were rent; and the saints arose, and were crowned at the right hand of the Son of Man, with crowns of glory;

**57** And as many of the spirits as were in prison came forth, and stood on the right hand of God; and the remainder were reserved in chains of darkness until the judgment of the great day.

**58** And again Enoch wept and cried unto the Lord, saying: When shall the earth rest?

**59** And Enoch beheld the Son of Man ascend up unto the Father; and he called unto the Lord, saying: Wilt thou not come again upon the earth? Forasmuch as thou art God, and I know thee, and thou hast sworn unto me, and commanded me that I should ask in the name of thine Only Begotten; thou hast made me, and given unto me a right to thy throne, and not of myself, but through thine own grace; wherefore, I ask thee if thou wilt not come again on the earth.

**60** And the Lord said unto Enoch: As I live, ***even so will I come in the last days, in the days of wickedness and vengeance, to fulfil the oath which I have made unto you concerning the children of Noah;***

> **61** And the day shall come that the earth shall rest, but before that day the heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, ***but my people will I preserve;***
>
> **62** ***And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.***
>
> **63** ***And the Lord said unto Enoch: Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there,*** and we will receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other;
>
> **64** And there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest.

Everyone knows that eventually "the bow" will be removed... Why? Is it because the Lord is going to flood the earth again? God forbid... This should tell us alone that "the bow" has a lot more meaning than simply "a flood," and when the covenant has been fulfilled, the bow shall be removed. And what is the covenant? The covenant is:

**Moses 7**

> **61** ... but my people will I preserve;
>
> **62** And righteousness will I send down out of heaven ; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.

**JST, Genesis 9**

> **21** ... that I may remember the everlasting covenant, which I made unto thy father Enoch, that, when men should keep all my commandments, Zion should again come on the earth, the city of Enoch, which I have caught up unto myself.
>
> **23** ... And the general assembly of the church of the firstborn shall come down out of heaven, and possess the earth, and shall have place until the end come. ***And this is mine everlasting covenant, which I made with thy father Enoch.***

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Now I understand by this quotation, that God clearly manifested to Enoch the redemption which He prepared, by offering the Messiah as a Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world; and by virtue of the same, the glorious resurrection of the Savior, and the resurrection of all the human family, even a resurrection of their corporeal bodies, is brought to pass; and also righteousness and truth are to sweep the earth as with a flood. And now, I ask, how righteousness and truth are going to sweep the earth as with a flood? I will answer. Men and angels are to be co-workers in bringing to pass this great work, and Zion is to be prepared, even a new Jerusalem, for the elect that are to be gathered from the four quarters of the earth, and to be established an holy city, for the tabernacle of the Lord shall be with them.
>
> ("The Glorious Resurrection," *TPJS,* p. 84)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Now Enoch was in good company in his views upon this subject: "And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Revelation 21:3).
>
> ("The Elect Must Be Gathered," *TPJS,* p. 84)

Why is the bow removed?

> ... for there shall be my tabernacle... Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there (Moses 7:62–63).

Covenant fulfilled.

It is everywhere! I just wish people could/would see it, for ***we*** are what is holding it back:

> "... that ***when*** thy posterity shall embrace the truth and look upward à ***then*** shall Zion look downward, and all the heavens shall shake with gladness, and the earth shall tremble with joy" (JST, Genesis 9:22).

## Lachoneus's Central Gathering

**3 Nephi 3**

> **21** But Gidgiddoni saith unto them: The Lord forbid; for if we should go up against them the Lord would deliver us into their hands; ***therefore we will prepare ourselves in the center of our lands,*** and we will gather all our armies together, and we will not go against them, but we will wait till they shall come against us; therefore as the Lord liveth, if we do this he will deliver them into our hands.
>
> **22** And it came to pass in the seventeenth year, in the latter end of the year, ***the proclamation of Lachoneus had gone forth throughout all the face of the land, and they had taken their horses, and their chariots, and their cattle, and all their flocks, and their herds, and their grain, and all their substance, and did march forth by thousands and by tens of thousands, until they had all gone forth to the place which had been appointed that they should gather themselves together,*** to defend themselves against their enemies.
>
> **23** And the land which was appointed was the land of Zarahemla, and the land which was between the land Zarahemla and the land Bountiful, yea, to the line which was between the land Bountiful and the land Desolation.
>
> **24** And ***there were a great many thousand people who were called Nephites, who did gather themselves together in this land.*** Now Lachoneus did cause that they should gather themselves together in the land southward, because of the great curse which was upon the land northward.
>
> **25** And they did fortify themselves against their enemies; ***and they did dwell in one land, and in one body, and they did fear the words which had been spoken by Lachoneus, insomuch that they did repent of all their sins; and they did put up their prayers unto the Lord their God, that he would deliver them*** in the time that their enemies should come down against them to battle.

**3 Nephi 4**

> **4** Therefore, there was no chance for the robbers to plunder and to obtain food, save it were to come up in open battle against the Nephites; and ***the Nephites being in one body, and having so great a number, and having reserved for themselves provisions, and horses and cattle, and flocks of every kind, that they might subsist for the space of seven years,*** in the which time they did hope to destroy the robbers from off the face of the land; and thus the eighteenth year did pass away.

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

> **65** And with one heart and with one mind, gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you.
>
> **66** And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God;
>
> **67** And the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion.
>
> **68** And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety.
>
> **69** And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another.
>
> **70** And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore we cannot stand.
>
> **71** And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy.

This ties perfectly into "Joseph in Egypt as a Type," gathering into the center of the land, avoiding "places of Desolation," fleeing to Zion, etc.

## The Sons of Helaman

**Helaman, Sons of**

> In the Book of Mormon, sons of converted Lamanites known as Ammonites who became warriors under Helaman's charge (Alma 53:16–22).
>
> (*Guide to the Scriptures,* "Helaman, Sons of")

So these people were originally gathered by Ammon, not Helaman, and they called themselves Ammonites because they were gathered and prepared by Ammon. Later, these converted sons served under Helaman.

**3 Nephi 6**

> **20** ***And there began to be men inspired from heaven and sent forth, standing among the people in all the land, preaching and testifying boldly*** of the sins and iniquities of the people, and testifying unto them concerning the redemption which the Lord would make for his people… ***and they did testify boldly***…
>
> **21** Now there were many of the people who were exceedingly angry because of those who testified of these things; and those who were angry were chiefly the chief judges, and they who had been high priests and lawyers; yea, all those who were lawyers were angry with those who testified of these things.

**Micah 5**

> **5** And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, ***then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men.***

**Helaman, Sons of** (Cont.)

> Helaman considered them worthy to be called his sons, Alma 56:10.
>
> (*Guide to the Scriptures,* "Helaman, Sons of")

Helaman considered them worthy to be called "his sons."

**Wandle Mace**

> "Those who are your friends are my friends, and I promise you when I come again, I will lead you forth, so that where I am you shall be with me. Boys—he always called us 'his boys'—don't be sad, don't be cast down, I will come back again." After a little hesitation he added, "as soon as I can." That expression, "as soon as I can," sank deep into my heart and confirmed my fears. I never expected to see him again alive. The sad expression upon his face as he looked upon us, "his boys," for the last time I shall never forget. I felt in my inmost soul that he was going to be butchered, and we should see him no more alive.
>
> (*Autobiography of Wandle Mace,* typescript, BYU Special Collections, pp. 145–146; *Autobiography of Wandle Mace,* typescript, BYU Special Collections, pp. 131–132—Joseph Smith, to the Nauvoo Legion the final time)

**Heber C. Kimball**

> Take the boys here, the sons of our brethren and sisters, and you may cut them into inch pieces, and they will not forsake this cause, but they will defend it to the last. Some of them may be rough, and perhaps some of them do not pray much, but send them into the vineyard, and then you will see them shew forth the power that is in them. At present the Prophet Joseph's boys lay apparently in a state of slumber, everything seems to be perfectly calm with them, but by and by God will wake them up, and they will roar like the thunders of Mount Sinai.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 4, Discourse 1)

**Helaman, Sons of** (Fin.)

> They defeated the Lamanites and were preserved by their faith such that none were slain, Alma 56:52–54, 56; 57:26.
>
> (*Guide to the Scriptures,* "Helaman, Sons of")

**Doctrine and Covenants 103:21–28. The Lord commands the Prophet Joseph Smith to go to Zion**

> In December 1833 the Lord revealed a parable regarding the redemption of the land of Zion. In that parable "a certain nobleman" had his servants plant 12 olive trees on a "very choice piece of land" (D&C 101:44). He commanded his servants to "set watchmen round about them, and build a tower, that one may overlook the land" and protect it from the enemy (D&C 101:45). However, the servants did not complete the tower, and the enemy "came by night, and … destroyed their works, and broke down the olive-trees" (see D&C 101:46–51). The nobleman, the Lord of the vineyard, then said to one of his servants, "Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, … and go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard" (D&C 101:55–56).
>
> In the revelation recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 103, the Lord identified the Prophet Joseph Smith as the servant in the parable who would "redeem," or reclaim, the vineyard (see D&C 103:21).
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (2018))

**1 Nephi 22**

> **16** For the time soon cometh that the fulness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all the children of men; ***for he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous.***
>
> **17** Wherefore, ***he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire.***

## Gideon and His Boys

**Isaiah 10** (2 Nephi 20:24–27)

> **24** Therefore, thus saith the Lord God of Hosts: O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian; he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt.

**25** For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.

**26** And the Lord of Hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb; and as his rod was upon the sea so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.

**27** And it shall come to pass in that day that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.

**Judges 6–9. Introduction**

Israel enjoyed a period of relative peace for 40 years, but the younger generation that was born into this peace and prosperity trusted in their own strength and wisdom and did not rely on the Lord. Thus, the people eventually again did evil in the sight of the Lord. Because of the Israelites' disobedience, the Lord allowed them to be oppressed by the Midianites. Through an angel, the Lord called upon Gideon to deliver Israel. Gideon and his army of 300 men defeated a vast army of Midianites.

(*Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* (2015), "Unit 16: Day 2, Judges 6–9")

**Judges 6:1–10. Because of disobedience, the Israelites are oppressed by the Midianites**

Many challenges we face can be difficult or impossible to overcome by ourselves. However, the Lord is ready to help and strengthen us ***if we come to Him.*** In the book of Judges, a man named Gideon helped Israel gain the Lord's help and overcome seemingly impossible adversity. As you study Gideon's life, look for principles that show you how to gain the Lord's help when you face your own challenges.

(*Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* (2015), "Unit 16: Day 2, Judges 6–9")

1. Israel enjoys a space of peace and prosperity
2. A generation is raised that no longer relies on the Lord (i.e. the tower) but on their own strength (i.e.. "I know how to better use the money than build the tower")
3. They enter a period of slothfulness and wickedness
4. The Lord scourges them, allows them to be oppressed by another group of people
5. "The remnant shall return, yea, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God" (Isaiah 10/2 Nephi 20:21) i.e. The scourging humbled them and woke them up
6. The Lord sends an angel (i.e. The servant) to gather the strength of His house
7. Redemption occurs with but a few

**(22-17) Judges 6:1–10. Why Was the Presence of the Midianites and the Amalekites such a Terrible Scourge to Israel?**

"The Midianites and the Amalekites were the children of the desert who, through their roving habits which begot naturally a desire for plunder, led them into a systematic practice of robbing the Israelites. During the seasons of harvest they came from the deserts on the south and the east like great swarms of locusts and carried away the corn [grain] and the live-stock upon which the Israelites subsisted.

"For seven years Israel was thus impoverished, and adopted every means at their command to conceal their property and to hide themselves from the dangers of slaughter by the Midianites. In that period, through southern Palestine, they made caverns in the earth that may still be seen. In time, however, they came to feel so deeply their suffering and humiliation that they appealed to Jehovah, the God they had forsaken in their worship. He was their last refuge, their last means of escape from the awful bondage of those times." (Tanner, Old Testament Studies, 1:288–89.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Genesis–2 Samuel* (Third edition, 2003), "Judges 1–12: The Reign of the Judges, Part 1," p. 254)

**Judges 6:1–10. Because of disobedience, the Israelites are oppressed by the Midianites**

Read Judges 6:1, looking for what the Israelites did that caused them to lose the Lord's blessings. Recall that in Judges 1–5 the "evil" the Israelites did was ***worshipping the false gods*** of the other inhabitants in the promised land. ***Because of this, Israel lost the Lord's protection.*** …

Read Judges 6:7–10, looking for how the Lord responded to the Israelites' cries. …

One truth we can learn from this account is that **the Lord can answer our prayers through the words of the prophets.**

(*Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* (2015), "Unit 16: Day 2, Judges 6–9")

**Judges 6**

**6** And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel cried unto the Lord.

**7** And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord because of the Midianites,

**8** That the Lord sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage;

**9** And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from before you, and gave you their land;

**10** And I said unto you, I am the Lord your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ye have not obeyed my voice.

Prophet(s) came among them telling them to look to the rock from whence they were hewn. In essence, telling them that if they had faith as the brother of Jared and were obedient, none of these things would have happened to them. Thus also identifying the solution to the problem—repent, be obedient again, and have faith as the brother of Jared, and rend their veils of unbelief.

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**6** Behold, I say unto you, there were jarrings, and contentions, and envyings, and strifes, and lustful and covetous desires among them; therefore by these things they polluted their inheritances.

**7** ***They were slow to hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; therefore, the Lord their God is slow to hearken unto their prayers, to answer them in the day of their trouble.***

**8** In the day of their peace they esteemed lightly my counsel; but, in the day of their trouble, of necessity they feel after me.

**9** Verily I say unto you, notwithstanding their sins, my bowels are filled with compassion towards them. I will not utterly cast them off; and in the day of wrath I will remember mercy.

**10** I have sworn, and the decree hath gone forth by a former commandment which I have given unto you, that I would let fall the sword of mine indignation in behalf of my people; and even as I have said, it shall come to pass.

**11** Mine indignation is soon to be poured out without measure upon all nations; and this will I do when the cup of their iniquity is full.

**Mosiah 21**

**14** And they did humble themselves even in the depths of humility; and they did cry mightily to God; yea, even all the day long did they cry unto their God that he would deliver them out of their afflictions.

> **15** ***And now the Lord was slow to hear their cry because of their iniquities;*** nevertheless the Lord did hear their cries, and began to soften the hearts of the Lamanites that they began to ease their burdens; yet the Lord did not see fit to deliver them out of bondage.

**Judges 6:11–24. An angel of the Lord calls Gideon to deliver Israel**

> In Judges 6:11–13 we learn that in addition to sending a prophet to the children of Israel, the Lord also called a judge who was a "mighty man of valour" (Judges 6:12; *valor* means courage or bravery) as the military leader to deliver them from the Midianites. Read Judges 6:14–16, looking for how Gideon responded to his call to serve. You may want to mark his response in your scriptures. …
>
> In Judges 6:17–24 the Lord showed Gideon a sign to assure him that this call came from God. There is a difference between seeking a sign from God before we will believe and have faith and seeking a confirmation with a sincere heart, real intent, and faith (see Moroni 10:4). The motive for seeking a sign or confirmation from God is important (see D&C 63:7–9). "Some people claim that they would believe in God or His work if they were able to receive a sign. But faith does not come by signs. … Signs are given to those who are faithful and obedient to strengthen them in their faith and to help them carry out the will of God" (Gospel Topics, "Signs"; lds.org/topics). Gideon righteously sought in faith for a sign, or confirmation.
>
> (*Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* (2015),
>
> "Unit 16: Day 2, Judges 6–9")

**(22-18) Judges 6:11–24. Since the Lord Condemns Sign-Seeking, How Do We Explain Gideon's Request?**

> "When Gideon asked for a 'sign' he seemed only to want a sign that the messenger was a bona fide emissary of the *Lord* (v. 17). On this point, note that messengers may sometimes be from the wrong source and discernment is important. (See, e.g., D&C 129; see another consideration of the problem in II Corinthians 11:13–15; I Corinthians 12:10; and I John 4:1–2.) (*Signs may be* given, based upon man's faith and the will of God. D&C 63:10.)
>
> "When Gideon made a meal of meat, cakes and broth, and the angel turned it into a miraculous burnt offering, this 'sign' quite overwhelmed Gideon. But the *Lord* kindly gave him comfort and peace, and Gideon gratefully named the monument he built there '*Lord* of Peace.'" (Rasmussen, Introduction to the Old Testament, 1:150.)
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Genesis–2 Samuel* (Third edition, 2003),
>
> "Judges 1–12: The Reign of the Judges, Part 1," p. 255)

Discerning of spirits and messengers of God comes up again and again. If Joseph Smith is resurrected and he resurrects Brigham and Orson and Parley, etc. and they come to your house, how will you be able to discern? Because Gideon understood that (a) he wasn't the prophet (remember we've already had the prophet identified), and (b) the devil can appear as an angel of light, he simply couldn't accept it at face value; he had to confirm that the messenger was of God. Like the manuals explain here, there is a difference between being a sign seeker to believe vs. a sign seeker to confirm. This also has its type and shadow in "standing in holy places vs. lifting up your voice, cursing God and dying."

**Judges 6:25–40. In obedience to the Lord, Gideon removes false idols and prepares for battle**

> Read Judges 6:25–26, looking for what the Lord told Gideon to do before he delivered Israel from the Midianites. Look at footnote 25*b* to help you understand what the term *grove* meant.
>
> Notice that the altar Gideon was commanded to destroy belonged to his father. Think about how difficult this command would have been if you had been in Gideon's position.
>
> Why was it important to destroy the altar of the false god Baal before overcoming the physical oppression of the Midianties? What can we learn from the Lord's instructions to Gideon about our efforts to receive help and strength from the Lord?
>
> From Judges 6:25–26 we can learn the following principle: **If we desire to have the Lord's help and strength, we must remove spiritually unclean and evil practices from our lives.**
>
> As shown in Judges 6:27–40, Gideon did as he was commanded. The next day the men of the city wanted to kill Gideon because he destroyed their false idols. Gideon's father spoke in his defense, and the men of the city did not kill him. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon, and he gathered an army of Israelites together. The Lord then showed Gideon another sign to assure him that the Lord had chosen him to deliver Israel.
>
> (*Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* (2015),
>
> "Unit 16: Day 2, Judges 6–9")

**(22-19) Judges 6:25–7:1. How Did Gideon Receive the Name Jerubbaal and What Does It Mean?**

> Gideon's father, Joash, owned a grove and an altar dedicated to the false god Baal. Groves of trees played a prominent part in ancient heathen worship. Since it was thought wrong to shut up the gods with walls, groves of trees were often used as natural temples. Within the groves the immoral rites of the heathen religions were performed.
>
> Gideon and ten other men followed the Lord's commandments to tear down the grove and the altar and in their place erect an altar to Jehovah. The men of the city cried for Gideon's death, but Joash defended his son's actions. Joash named Gideon Jerubbaal, "let Baal plead," meaning that if Baal was upset by Gideon's actions Baal could defend his own cause. The name Jerubbaal remained with Gideon on some occasions thereafter.
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Genesis–2 Samuel* (Third edition, 2003), "Judges 1–12: The Reign of the Judges, Part 1," p. 255)

The "fathers" became slothful and wicked with idolatry being the big issue.

1. The Lord commands ***the young and middle-aged men*** to tear down these false statues of idolatry. This "debris" consisted of vegetation/trees, representing a "fertility goddess."
2. The young and middle-aged then built a proper altar unto Jehovah in its stead
3. As this is going on, the older generation which loved their idolatry desire the death of these young and middle-aged men

The Salt Lake City Temple recently had the vegetation and trees surrounding it torn out. As this was taking place an earthquake caused Moroni to drop the trumpet from his hand.

**President Nelson** then said this (in 2021):

> As I have watched workers dig out old tree roots, plumbing, wiring, and a leaky fountain, I have thought about the need for each of us to remove, with the Savior's help, the old debris in our lives.
>
> The gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel of repentance. Because of the Savior's Atonement, His gospel provides an invitation to keep changing, growing, and becoming more pure. It is a gospel of hope, of healing, and of progress. Thus, the gospel is a message of joy! Our spirits rejoice with every small step forward we take.
>
> Part of the gathering of Israel, and a very important part, is the charge for us as a people to be worthy and willing to help prepare the world for the Second Coming of the Lord.
>
> As we listen to the messages that have been carefully prepared by our leaders under the direction of the Holy Ghost, I invite you to pray to

identify the debris you should remove from your life so you can become more worthy.

("Welcome Message," General Conference, April 2021)

**3. Gideon—the strength of faith in God**

When Gideon believed that the Lord had truly commanded him to deliver Israel, he went forward with faith.

(*Old Testament: Gospel Doctrine Teacher's Manual* (2001), "Lesson 19: The Reign of the Judges," p. 90)

**Judges 7. The Lord delivers the Midianites into the hands of the Israelites**

Imagine that you, like Gideon, have been commanded to conquer and drive out the Midianites' army. Read Judges 7:12, looking for the size of the army. How many soldiers would you want to take with you into battle against such a vast army?

(*Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* (2015), "Unit 16: Day 2, Judges 6–9")

This is a much more inspired series of questions than one might initially realize. When people think of "the work of the Lord accelerating in the last days" they tend to think of numbers, ***more numbers,*** and then they think of ***even more numbers*** (i.e. *wide* growth). When the Lord speaks of growth, when the Lord speaks of "precious fruit" and the accelerating of His work, He is not talking about growth outward, He is talking about *depth* of growth, *depth* of conversion, *celestial people,* etc.

In other words, when the Lord is talking about accelerating His work in the last days, he is talking specifically about people who "think Celestial"...

**Judges 7**

**1** Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

**2** And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.

**3. Gideon—the strength of faith in God**

Why did the Lord want Gideon's army of 32,000 men reduced to 300 to fight the Midianites? (See Judges 7:2. The Lord wanted the Israelites to trust him and recognize his power, not their power.) How does the Lord teach us to trust him and recognize his power today?

(*Old Testament: Gospel Doctrine Teacher's Manual* (2001), "Lesson 19: The Reign of the Judges," p. 90)

**Judges 7. The Lord delivers the Midianites into the hands of the Israelites**

Read Judges 7:1–2, looking for what the Lord said about the size of Gideon's army. If you had been in Gideon's position, what might you have thought when the Lord said you had too many soldiers in your army?

In verse 2, mark why the Lord wanted to reduce the size of Gideon's army. (To *vaunt* means to boast or praise.) How does thinking too much about our own strength and efforts prevent us from recognizing that our blessings and strength come from the Lord?

(*Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* (2015), "Unit 16: Day 2, Judges 6–9")

**Judges 7**

**3** Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.

**Judges 7. The Lord delivers the Midianites into the hands of the Israelites**

Read Judges 7:3, looking for what the Lord said Gideon needed to do to reduce the size of his army.

How many were in Gideon's army originally?

How many remained after Gideon told those who were afraid to leave?

(*Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* (2015), "Unit 16: Day 2, Judges 6–9")

**Judges 7**

**4** And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will ***try*** them for thee...

The footnote for the word "try" says "or test," meaning the Lord is going to provide a test at this time. The footnote also takes you to:

**Doctrine and Covenants 98**

**9** Nevertheless, when the wicked rule the people mourn.

**10** Wherefore, honest men and wise men should be sought for diligently, and good men and wise men ye should observe to uphold; otherwise whatsoever is less than these cometh of evil. (Gideon)

**11** And I give unto you a commandment, that ye shall forsake all evil and cleave unto all good, that ye shall live by every word which proceedeth forth out of the mouth of God. (Exact obedience)

**12** For he will give unto the faithful line upon line, precept upon precept; and I will try you and prove you herewith.

**13** And whoso layeth down his life in my cause, for my name's sake, shall find it again, even life eternal.

**14** Therefore, be not afraid of your enemies, for I have decreed in my heart, saith the Lord, that I will prove you in all things, whether you will abide in my covenant, even unto death, that you may be found worthy. (Have no fear)

**15** For if ye will not abide in my covenant ye are not worthy of me.

**16** Therefore, renounce war and proclaim peace, and seek diligently to turn the hearts of the children to their fathers, and the hearts of the fathers to the children; (part of the test)

**Judges 7**

**4** ...there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.

**5** So he brought down the people unto the water: and the Lord said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.

**6** And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

**7** And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place.

**8** So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the rest of Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men: and the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley.

After the group was reduced to 300, the army went on to complete its task in a miraculous manner with the Lord making bare His arm. Skipping that for now, let us hone in on what is the most important thing

for us right now to comprehend, and that would be understanding how these 300 were selected.

There are only two things provided to let us know how the Lord did select this group. We also learn the same two things in D&C 98 that we read above. They are:

1. They had no fear (and remember the prepared are the only people who will not fear in that day, meaning this group is temporally ***and*** spiritually prepared. Any men whose families were not prepared temporally were among those who feared and left)
2. Exact obedience.

**D&C 101:67–75. Further Instructions Concerning Zion**

The Lord spoke of two important items having to do with the establishment of Zion: the gathering of the Saints to places appointed, and the purchase of land in the region of Zion. The Lord cautioned in verses 68 and 72 that the work was not to proceed with haste. ***Part of the difficulty experienced in the original attempt to establish Zion was caused by many Saints' coming to Zion ill-prepared. They apparently felt that the Lord would care for their needs rather than have them do it themselves. This idea was contrary to the Lord's counsel from the very beginning of Zion's founding,*** for He said, "And let the work of the gathering be not in haste, nor by flight" (D&C 58:56). He warned again: "And now, behold, this is the will of the Lord your God concerning his saints, that they should assemble themselves together unto the land of Zion, not in haste, lest there should be confusion, which bringeth pestilence" (D&C 63:24).

Enrichment B in the Appendix discusses Zion.

(Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual (Second ed., 2001), p. 243)

**Judges 7. The Lord delivers the Midianites into the hands of the Israelites**

Consider the following principle that we can learn from this account: **If we follow the Lord's commands with exactness and always acknowledge our dependence on Him, then He will help us overcome our challenges.** Gideon's small force succeeded because they were exactly obedient; every man did as he was instructed (see Judges 7:21).

(*Old Testament Study Guide for Home-Study Seminary Students* (2015),

"Unit 16: Day 2, Judges 6–9")

So the two take aways are: A) they were prepared and thus they did not fear and B) they obeyed with exactness. The same things which are shadowed and prophesied to take place surrounding the return of Joseph Smith Jr. and the Redemption of Zion.

**Judges 7**

**9** ¶ And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand.

**10** But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host:

**11** And thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down unto the host. Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the armed men that were in the host.

**12** And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the children of the east lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the seaside for multitude.

**13** And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along.

**14** And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save ***the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.***

**15** ¶ And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.

**16** And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, ***and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers.***

**17** And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do.

**18** ***When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.***

**19** ¶ So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: ***and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands.***

**20** ***And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.***

**21** And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled.

**22** ***And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host:*** and the host fled to Beth-shittah in Zererath, and to the border of Abel-meholah, unto Tabbath.

The sword of the Lord, Gideon (Joseph Smith Jr.), every man's sword was against his fellow, etc.

## Red Horse (Wars), Pale Horse (Pestilence), and Black Horse (Famine)

This pattern is played out time and time again and for the same exact reasons—people would rather listen to priestcrafters vs real prophets.

**Alma 45**

**11** Yea, and then shall they see ***wars and pestilences, yea, famines*** and bloodshed, even until the people of Nephi shall become extinct

**12** Yea, and ***this because they shall dwindle in unbelief and fall into the works of darkness, and lasciviousness, and all manner of iniquities; yea, I say unto you, that because they shall sin against so great light and knowledge***...

**3 Nephi 8**

**23** And it came to pass that it did last for the space of three days that there was no light seen; and there was great mourning and howling and weeping among all the people continually; yea, great were the groanings of the people, because of the darkness and the great destruction which had come upon them.

**24** And in one place they were heard to cry, saying: ***O that we had repented*** before this great and terrible day, and then would our brethren have been spared, and they would not have been burned in that great city Zarahemla.

**25** And in another place they were heard to cry and mourn, saying: O that we had repented before this great and terrible day, ***and had not killed and stoned the prophets, and cast them out;*** then would our mothers and our fair daughters, and our children have been spared, and

not have been buried up in that great city Moronihah. And thus were the howlings of the people great and terrible.

**2 Nephi 10**

**5** But ***because of priestcrafts*** and iniquities, they at Jerusalem will stiffen their necks against him, that he be crucified.

**6** Wherefore, because of their iniquities, ***destructions, famines, pestilences, and bloodshed*** shall come upon them; and they who shall not be destroyed shall be scattered among all nations.

**Ether 11**

**5** And it came to pass that the brother of Shiblom caused ***that all the prophets who prophesied of the destruction of the people should be put to death;***

**6** And there was great calamity in all the land, for ***they had testified that a great curse should come upon the land, and also upon the people, and that there should be a great destruction among them, such an one as never had been upon the face of the earth, and their bones should become as heaps of earth upon the face of the land except they should repent of their wickedness.***

**7** ***And they hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord, because of their wicked combinations;*** wherefore, there began to be ***wars*** and contentions in all the land, and also many ***famines*** and ***pestilences,*** insomuch that there was a great destruction, such an one as never had been known upon the face of the earth; and all this came to pass in the days of Shiblom.

**Helaman 12**

**2** Yea, and we may see at the very time when he doth prosper his people, yea, in the increase of their fields, their flocks and their herds, and in gold, and in silver, and in all manner of precious things of every kind and art; sparing their lives, and delivering them out of the hands of their enemies; softening the hearts of their enemies that they should not declare wars against them; yea, and in fine, doing all things for the welfare and happiness of his people; yea, then is the time that they do harden their hearts, and do forget the Lord their God, and do trample under their feet the Holy One—yea, and this because of their ease, and their exceedingly great prosperity.

**3** And thus we see that except the Lord doth chasten his people with many afflictions, yea, except he doth visit them ***with death and with terror, and with famine and with all manner of pestilence,*** they will not remember him.

**4** O how foolish, and how vain, and how evil, and devilish, and how quick to do iniquity, and how slow to do good, are the children of men; yea, ***how quick to hearken unto the words of the evil one, and to set their hearts upon the vain things of the world!***

**5** Yea, how quick to be lifted up in pride; yea, how quick to boast, and do all manner of that which is iniquity; and how slow are they to remember the Lord their God, ***and to give ear unto his counsels, yea, how slow to walk in wisdom's paths!***

**6** ***Behold, they do not desire that the Lord their God, who hath created them, should rule and reign over them;*** notwithstanding his great goodness and his mercy towards them, ***they do set at naught his counsels, and they will not that he should be their guide.***

**Mosiah 12**

**2** Yea, wo be unto this generation! And the Lord said unto me: ***Stretch forth thy hand and prophesy,*** saying: Thus saith the Lord, it shall come to pass that this generation, because of their iniquities, shall be ***brought into bondage,*** and shall be smitten on the cheek; yea, and shall be driven by men, ***and shall be slain;*** and the vultures of the air, and the dogs, yea, and the wild beasts, ***shall devour their flesh.***

**3** And it shall come to pass that the life of king Noah shall be valued even as a garment in a hot furnace; for he shall know that I am the Lord.

**4** And it shall come to pass that I will smite this my people with sore afflictions, yea, ***with famine and with pestilence;*** and I will cause that they shall howl all the day long.

**5** Yea, and I will cause that they shall have burdens lashed upon their backs; and they shall be driven before like a dumb ass.

**6** And it shall come to pass ***that I will send forth hail among them,*** and it shall smite them; and they shall also be smitten with the east wind; and ***insects shall pester their land also, and devour their grain.***

**7** And they shall be smitten ***with a great pestilence—and all this will I do because of their iniquities and abominations.***

**8** And it shall come to pass that except they ***repent I will utterly destroy them from off the face of the earth...And many things did Abinadi prophesy against this people.***

**9** ***And it came to pass that they were angry with him; and they took him and carried him bound before the king***...

**Helaman 11**

**3** And it came to pass that in this year ***Nephi did cry unto the Lord,*** saying:

**4** O Lord, ***do not suffer that this people shall be destroyed by the sword;*** but O Lord, rather ***let there be a famine in the land,*** to stir them up in remembrance of the Lord their God, and perhaps they will repent and turn unto thee.

**5** And so it was done, according to the words of Nephi. And ***there was a great famine upon the land,*** among all the people of Nephi. And thus in the seventy and fourth year ***the famine did continue, and the work of destruction did cease by the sword but became sore by famine.***

**6** And this work of destruction did also continue in the seventy and fifth year. For the earth was smitten that it was dry, and did not yield forth grain in the season of grain; and the whole earth was smitten, even among the Lamanites as well as among the Nephites, so that they were smitten that they did perish by thousands in the more wicked parts of the land.

**7** And it came to pass that the people saw that they were about to perish by famine, and they began to remember the Lord their God; and they began to remember the words of Nephi.

**8** ***And the people began to plead with their chief judges and their leaders, that they would say unto Nephi:*** Behold, we know that thou art a man of God, and therefore cry unto the Lord our God that he turn away from us this famine, lest all the words which thou hast spoken concerning our destruction be fulfilled.

**9** And it came to pass that the judges did say unto Nephi, according to the words which had been desired. And it came to pass that ***when Nephi saw that the people had repented and did humble themselves in sackcloth, he cried again unto the Lord, saying:***

**10** O Lord, ***behold this people repenteth; and they have swept away the band of Gadianton from amongst them*** insomuch that they have become extinct, and they have concealed their secret plans in the earth.

**11** Now, O Lord, because of this their humility wilt thou turn away thine anger, and let thine anger be appeased in the destruction of those wicked men whom thou hast already destroyed.

**12** O Lord, wilt thou turn away thine anger, yea, thy fierce anger, ***and cause that this famine may cease in this land.***

**13** ***O Lord, wilt thou hearken unto me, and cause that it may be done according to my words,*** and send forth rain upon the face of the earth, that she may bring forth her fruit, and her grain in the season of grain.

**14** ***O Lord, thou didst hearken unto my words when I said, Let there be a famine, that the pestilence of the sword might cease;*** and I know that thou wilt, even at this time, hearken unto my words, for thou saidst that: If this people repent I will spare them.

**15** Yea, O Lord, and thou seest that they have repented, ***because of the famine and the pestilence and destruction which has come unto them.***

**16** And now, O Lord, wilt thou turn away thine anger, and try again if they will serve thee? And if so, O Lord, thou canst bless them according to thy words which thou hast said.

**17** And it came to pass that in the seventy and sixth year ***the Lord did turn away his anger from the people, and caused that rain should fall upon the earth, insomuch that it did bring forth her fruit in the season of her fruit. And it came to pass that it did bring forth her grain in the season of her grain.***

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

***Pestilence, hail, famine,*** and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 17)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

I have asked of the Lord concerning His coming; and while asking the Lord, He gave a sign and said, "In the days of Noah I set a bow in the heavens as a sign and token that in any year that the bow should be seen the Lord would not come; but there should be seed time and harvest during that year; but whenever you see the bow withdrawn, it shall be a token that there shall be ***famine, pestilence, and great distress among the nations,*** and that the coming of the Messiah is not far distant."

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 340–41)

## The Testimony of All These Things

Now that you have the testimony of all these things laid before you, don't be found kicking against the pricks, don't be found teaching against miracles, don't be found teaching against the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem—for "him that shall say at that day, to get gain, that there can be no miracle wrought by Jesus Christ; for he that doeth this shall become like unto the son of perdition, for whom there was no mercy, according to the word of Christ!" I know that "the Lord remembereth his covenants… and he will do according to that which he hath sworn!"

**3 Nephi 29**

**4** And when ye shall see these sayings coming forth among you, then ye need not any longer spurn at the doings of the Lord, for the sword of his justice is in his right hand; and behold, at that day, if ye shall spurn at his doings he will cause that it shall soon overtake you.

**5** Wo unto him that spurneth at the doings of the Lord; yea, wo unto him that shall deny the Christ and his works!

**6** Yea, wo unto him that shall deny the revelations of the Lord, and that shall say the Lord no longer worketh by revelation, or by prophecy, or by gifts, or by tongues, or by healings, or by the power of the Holy Ghost!

**7** ***Yea, and wo unto him that shall say at that day, to get gain, that there can be no miracle wrought by Jesus Christ; for he that doeth this shall become like unto the son of perdition, for whom there was no mercy, according to the word of Christ!***

**8** Yea, and ye need not any longer hiss, nor spurn, nor make game of the Jews, nor any of the remnant of the house of Israel; for behold, ***the Lord remembereth his covenant unto them, and he will do unto them according to that which he hath sworn.***

**9** Therefore ye need not suppose that ye can turn the right hand of the Lord unto the left, that he may not execute judgment unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he hath made unto the house of Israel.

**Alma 30**

**43** And now Korihor said unto Alma: If thou wilt show me a sign, that I may be convinced that there is a God, yea, show unto me that he hath power, and then will I be convinced of the truth of thy words.

**44** But Alma said unto him: Thou hast had signs enough; will ye tempt your God? Will ye say, Show unto me a sign, when ye have the testimony of all these thy brethren, and also all the holy prophets? The scriptures are laid before thee, yea, and all things denote there is a God; yea, even the earth, and all things that are upon the face of it, yea, and its motion, yea, and also all the planets which move in their regular form do witness that there is a Supreme Creator.

**45** And yet do ye go about, leading away the hearts of this people, testifying unto them there is no God? And yet will ye deny against all these witnesses? And he said: Yea, I will deny, except ye shall show me a sign.

**46** And now it came to pass that Alma said unto him: Behold, I am grieved because of the hardness of your heart, yea, that ye will still resist the spirit of the truth, that thy soul may be destroyed.

**47** But behold, it is better that thy soul should be lost than that thou shouldst be the means of bringing many souls down to destruction, by thy lying and by thy flattering words; therefore if thou shalt deny again, behold God shall smite thee, that thou shalt become dumb, that thou shalt never open thy mouth any more, that thou shalt not deceive this people any more.

**48** Now Korihor said unto him: I do not deny the existence of a God, but I do not believe that there is a God; and I say also, that ye do not know that there is a God; and except ye show me a sign, I will not believe.

**49** Now Alma said unto him: This will I give unto thee for a sign, that thou shalt be struck dumb, according to my words; and I say, that in the name of God, ye shall be struck dumb, that ye shall no more have utterance.

**50** Now when Alma had said these words, Korihor was struck dumb, that he could not have utterance, according to the words of Alma.

**Luke 12 (JST)**

**50** And they said, Who then is that faithful and wise servant?

**51** And the Lord said unto them, It is that servant who watcheth, to impart his portion of meat in due season.

**52** Blessed be that servant whom his Lord shall find, when he cometh, so doing.

**53** Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

**54** But the evil servant is he who is not found watching. And if that servant is not found watching, he will say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and the maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken.

**55** The Lord of that servant will come in a day he looketh not for, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him down, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

**56** And that servant who knew his Lord's will and prepared not for his Lord's coming, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

**57** But he that knew not his Lord's will, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom the Lord has committed much, of him will men ask the more.

**58** For they are not well pleased with the Lord's doings; therefore, I am come to send fire on the earth; and what is it to you if I will that it be already kindled?

**59** But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished?

**60** Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

**61** For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

**62** The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

**63** ¶ And he said also unto the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, ye say straightway, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

**64** And when the south wind blows, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

**65** O hypocrites! Ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth. But how is it that ye do not discern this time?

**66** Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

**Mormon 8**

**21** And he that shall breathe out wrath and strifes against the work of the Lord, and against the covenant people of the Lord who are the house of Israel, and shall say: … the Lord will not remember his covenant which he hath made unto the house of Israel—the same is in danger to be hewn down and cast into the fire;

**22** For the eternal purposes of the Lord shall roll on, until all his promises shall be fulfilled.

**23** Search the prophecies of Isaiah. Behold, I cannot write them. Yea, behold I say unto you, that those saints who have gone before me, who have possessed this land, shall cry, yea, even from the dust will they cry unto the Lord; and as the Lord liveth he will remember the covenant which he hath made with them.

**26** And no one need say they shall not come, for they surely shall, for the Lord hath spoken it; for out of the earth shall they come, by the hand of the Lord, and none can stay it; and it shall come in a day when it shall be said that miracles are done away; and it shall come even as if one should speak from the dead.

**27** And it shall come in a day when the blood of saints shall cry unto the Lord, because of secret combinations and the works of darkness.

**28** Yea, it shall come in a day when the power of God shall be denied, and churches become defiled and be lifted up in the pride of their hearts; yea, even in a day when leaders of churches and teachers shall rise in the pride of their hearts, even to the envying of them who belong to their churches.

**29** Yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be heard of fires, and tempests, and vapors of smoke in foreign lands;

**30** And there shall also be heard of wars, rumors of wars, and earthquakes in divers places.

**32** Yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be churches built up that shall say: Come unto me, and for your money you shall be forgiven of your sins.

**33** O ye wicked and perverse and stiffnecked people, why have ye built up churches unto yourselves to get gain? Why have ye transfigured the holy word of God, that ye might bring damnation upon your souls? Behold, look ye unto the revelations of God; for behold, the time cometh at that day when all these things must be fulfilled.

**35** Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing.

**36** And I know that ye do walk in the pride of your hearts; and there are none ***save a few only who do not lift themselves up in the pride of their hearts, unto the wearing of very fine apparel, unto envying, and strifes, and malice, and persecutions, and all manner of iniquities; and your churches, yea, even every one, have become polluted because of the pride of your hearts.***

**37** For behold, ye do love money, and your substance, and your fine apparel, and the adorning of your churches, more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted.

**38** O ye pollutions, ye hypocrites, ye teachers, who sell yourselves for that which will canker, ***why have ye polluted the holy church of God?*** Why are ye ashamed to take upon you the name of Christ? Why do ye not think that greater is the value of an endless happiness than that misery which never dies—because of the praise of the world?

**2 Nephi 28**

**5** And they deny the power of God, the Holy One of Israel; and they say unto the people: Hearken unto us, and hear ye our precept; for behold there is no God today, for the Lord and the Redeemer hath done his work, and he hath given his power unto men;

**6** Behold, hearken ye unto my precept; if they shall say there is a miracle wrought by the hand of the Lord, believe it not; for this day he is not a God of miracles; he hath done his work.

**7** Yea, and there shall be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die; and it shall be well with us.

**8** And there shall also be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry; nevertheless, fear God—he will justify in committing a little sin; yea, lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this; and do all these things, for tomorrow we die; and if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God.

**9** Yea, and there shall be many which shall teach after this manner, false and vain and foolish doctrines, and shall be puffed up in their hearts, and shall seek deep to hide their counsels from the Lord; and their works shall be in the dark.

**10** And the blood of the saints shall cry from the ground against them.

**11** Yea, they have all gone out of the way; they have become corrupted.

**12** Because of pride, and because of false teachers, and false doctrine, their churches have become corrupted, and their churches are lifted up; because of pride they are puffed up.

**13** They rob the poor because of their fine sanctuaries; they rob the poor because of their fine clothing; and they persecute the meek and the poor in heart, because in their pride they are puffed up.

**14** They wear stiff necks and high heads; yea, and because of pride, and wickedness, and abominations, and whoredoms, they have all gone astray ***save it be a few, who are the humble followers of Christ; nevertheless, they are led, that in many instances they do err because they are taught by the precepts of men.***

**15** O the wise, and the learned, and the rich, that are puffed up in the pride of their hearts, and all those who preach false doctrines, and all those who commit whoredoms, and pervert the right way of the Lord, wo, wo, wo be unto them, saith the Lord God Almighty, for they shall be thrust down to hell!

**Alma 5**

**33** Behold, he sendeth an invitation unto all men, for the arms of mercy are extended towards them, and he saith: Repent, and I will receive you.

**34** Yea, he saith: Come unto me and ye shall partake of the fruit of the tree of life; yea, ye shall eat and drink of the bread and the waters of life freely;

**35** Yea, come unto me and bring forth works of righteousness, and ye shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire—

**36** For behold, the time is at hand that whosoever bringeth forth not good fruit, or whosoever doeth not the works of righteousness, the same have cause to wail and mourn.

**37** O ye workers of iniquity; ye that are puffed up in the vain things of the world, ye that have professed to have known the ways of righteousness nevertheless have gone astray, as sheep having no shepherd, notwithstanding a shepherd hath called after you and is still calling after you, but ye will not hearken unto his voice!

**38** Behold, I say unto you, that the good shepherd doth call you; yea, and in his own name he doth call you, which is the name of Christ; and

if ye will not hearken unto the voice of the good shepherd, to the name by which ye are called, behold, ye are not the sheep of the good shepherd.

**39** And now if ye are not the sheep of the good shepherd, of what fold are ye? Behold, I say unto you, that the devil is your shepherd, and ye are of his fold; and now, who can deny this? Behold, I say unto you, whosoever denieth this is a liar and a child of the devil.

**40** For I say unto you that whatsoever is good cometh from God, and whatsoever is evil cometh from the devil.

**41** Therefore, if a man bringeth forth good works he hearkeneth unto the voice of the good shepherd, and he doth follow him; but whosoever bringeth forth evil works, the same becometh a child of the devil, for he hearkeneth unto his voice, and doth follow him.

**42** And whosoever doeth this must receive his wages of him; therefore, for his wages he receiveth death, as to things pertaining unto righteousness, being dead unto all good works.

**43** And now, my brethren, I would that ye should hear me, for I speak in the energy of my soul; for behold, I have spoken unto you plainly that ye cannot err, or have spoken according to the commandments of God.

**44** For I am called to speak after this manner, according to the holy order of God, which is in Christ Jesus; yea, I am commanded to stand and testify unto this people the things which have been spoken by our fathers concerning the things which are to come.

**45** And this is not all. Do ye not suppose that I know of these things myself? Behold, I testify unto you that I do know that these things whereof I have spoken are true. And how do ye suppose that I know of their surety?

**46** Behold, I say unto you they are made known unto me by the Holy Spirit of God. Behold, I have fasted and prayed many days that I might know these things of myself. And now I do know of myself that they are true; for the Lord God hath made them manifest unto me by his Holy Spirit; and this is the spirit of revelation which is in me.

**47** And moreover, I say unto you that it has thus been revealed unto me, that the words which have been spoken by our fathers are true, even so according to the spirit of prophecy which is in me, which is also by the manifestation of the Spirit of God.

**48** I say unto you, that I know of myself that whatsoever I shall say unto you, concerning that which is to come, is true; and I say unto you, that I know that Jesus Christ shall come, yea, the Son, the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace, and mercy, and truth. And behold, it is he that cometh to take away the sins of the world, yea, the sins of every man who steadfastly believeth on his name.

**49** And now I say unto you that this is the order after which I am called, yea, to preach unto my beloved brethren, yea, and every one that dwelleth in the land; yea, to preach unto all, both old and young, both bond and free; yea, I say unto you the aged, and also the middle aged, and the rising generation; yea, to cry unto them that they must repent and be born again.

**50** Yea, thus saith the Spirit: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, for the kingdom of heaven is soon at hand; yea, the Son of God cometh in his glory, in his might, majesty, power, and dominion. Yea, my beloved brethren, I say unto you, that the Spirit saith: Behold the glory of the King of all the earth; and also the King of heaven shall very soon shine forth among all the children of men.

**51** And also the Spirit saith unto me, yea, crieth unto me with a mighty voice, saying: Go forth and say unto this people—Repent, for except ye repent ye can in nowise inherit the kingdom of heaven.

**52** And again I say unto you, the Spirit saith: Behold, the ax is laid at the root of the tree; therefore every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire, yea, a fire which cannot be consumed, even an unquenchable fire. Behold, and remember, the Holy One hath spoken it.

**53** And now my beloved brethren, I say unto you, can ye withstand these sayings; yea, can ye lay aside these things, and trample the Holy One under your feet; yea, can ye be puffed up in the pride of your hearts; yea, will ye still persist in the wearing of costly apparel and setting your hearts upon the vain things of the world, upon your riches?

**54** Yea, will ye persist in supposing that ye are better one than another; yea, will ye persist in the persecution of your brethren, who humble themselves and do walk after the holy order of God, wherewith they have been brought into this church, having been sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and they do bring forth works which are meet for repentance—

**55** Yea, and will you persist in turning your backs upon the poor, and the needy, and in withholding your substance from them?

**56** And finally, all ye that will persist in your wickedness, I say unto you that these are they who shall be hewn down and cast into the fire except they speedily repent.

**57** And now I say unto you, all you that are desirous to follow the voice of the good shepherd, come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate, and touch not their unclean things; and behold, their names shall be blotted out, that the names of the wicked shall not be numbered among the names of the righteous, that the word of God may be fulfilled, which saith: The names of the wicked shall not be mingled with the names of my people;

**58** For the names of the righteous shall be written in the book of life, and unto them will I grant an inheritance at my right hand. And now, my brethren, what have ye to say against this? I say unto you, if ye speak against it, it matters not, for the word of God must be fulfilled.

**59** For what shepherd is there among you having many sheep doth not watch over them, that the wolves enter not and devour his flock? And behold, if a wolf enter his flock doth he not drive him out? Yea, and at the last, if he can, he will destroy him.

**60** And now I say unto you that the good shepherd doth call after you; and if you will hearken unto his voice he will bring you into his fold, and ye are his sheep; and he commandeth you that ye suffer no ravenous wolf to enter among you, that ye may not be destroyed.

# A Day of Blood

## I Believe, Therefore I Have to Speak

**Penn Jillette,** a well-known atheist once explained:

> I've always said that I don't respect people who don't proselytize. I don't respect that at all. If you believe that there's a heaven and a hell, and people could be going to hell or not getting eternal life, and you think that it's not really worth telling them this because it would make it socially awkward—and atheists who think people shouldn't proselytize and who say just leave me along and keep your religion to yourself—how much do you have to hate somebody to *not* proselytize? How much do you have to hate somebody to believe everlasting life is possible and not tell them that?
>
> I mean, if I believed, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that a truck was coming at you, and you didn't believe that truck was bearing down on you, there is a certain point where I tackle you. And this is *more* important than that.
>
> (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=owZc3Xq8obk)

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

> **77** And I give unto you a commandment that you shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom.
>
> **78** Teach ye diligently and my grace shall attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand;
>
> **79** Of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are, things which must shortly come to pass; things which are at home, things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms—
>
> **80** That ye may be prepared in all things when I shall send you again to magnify the calling whereunto I have called you, and the mission with which I have commissioned you.
>
> **81** Behold, I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor.
>
> **82** Therefore, they are left without excuse, and their sins are upon their own heads.
>
> **83** He that seeketh me early shall find me, and shall not be forsaken.
>
> **84** Therefore, tarry ye, and labor diligently, that you may be perfected in your ministry to go forth among the Gentiles for the last time, as many as the mouth of the Lord shall name, to bind up the law and seal up the testimony, and to prepare the saints for the hour of judgment which is to come;
>
> **85** That their souls may escape the wrath of God, the desolation of abomination which awaits the wicked, both in this world and in the world to come. Verily, I say unto you, let those who are not the first elders continue in the vineyard until the mouth of the Lord shall call them, for their time is not yet come; ***their garments are not clean from the blood of this generation.***
>
> **86** Abide ye in the liberty wherewith ye are made free; entangle not yourselves in sin, but let your hands be clean, until the Lord comes.
>
> **87** ***For not many days hence and the earth shall tremble and reel to and fro as a drunken man; and the sun shall hide his face, and shall refuse to give light; and the moon shall be bathed in blood; and the stars shall become exceedingly angry, and shall cast themselves down as a fig that falleth from off a fig tree.***

**Moses 8**

> **20** And it came to pass that Noah called upon the children of men that they should repent; but they hearkened not unto his words;
>
> **21** And also, after that they had heard him, they came up before him, saying: Behold, we are the sons of God; have we not taken unto ourselves the daughters of men? And are we not eating and drinking, and marrying and giving in marriage? And our wives bear unto us children, and the same are mighty men, which are like unto men of old, men of great renown. And they hearkened not unto the words of Noah.

**Joseph Smith—Matthew 1**

> **37** And whoso treasureth up my word, shall not be deceived, for the Son of Man shall come, and he shall send his angels before him with the great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together ***the remainder of his elect*** from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.
>
> **38** Now learn a parable of the fig tree—When its branches are yet tender, and it begins to put forth leaves, you know that summer is nigh at hand;
>
> **39** So likewise, mine elect, when they shall see all these things, they shall know that he is near, even at the doors;
>
> **40** But of that day, and hour, no one knoweth; no, not the angels of God in heaven, but my Father only.
>
> **41** But as it was in the days of Noah, so it shall be also at the coming of the Son of Man;
>
> **42** For it shall be with them, as it was in the days which were before the flood; for until the day that Noah entered into the ark they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage;
>
> **43** And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.
>
> **44** Then shall be fulfilled that which is written, that in the last days, two shall be in the field, the one shall be taken, and the other left;
>
> **45** Two shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken, and the other left;
>
> **46** And what I say unto one, I say unto all men; watch, therefore, for you know not at what hour your Lord doth come.

As I sat in my chair (09/20/2023) studying that week's Come Follow Me scriptures, these scriptures came flooding into my head, and I saw myself, sitting at my chair studying—and I saw "the world as I knew it ending"... Wars, rumors of wars, blood, fire, and vapors of smoke... And then a child, small, I know this child, who tugs my shirt, looks up at me and says:

"What were you doing father, when the world as you knew it ended?"

What was I doing? What was I doing...? Was I studying scriptures...? Was I in the temple...? What was I doing? And then I am taken in mind to Jerusalem of old... Men, women and children playing in the streets, some in the temple, some studying their scriptures, and the army of Titus arrives, terrible, and surrounds the city... There was blood, fire, and vapors of smoke... And then a child, in spirit, tugging, pleading:

"What were you doing father, when the world as you knew it ended?"

Oh, what horror and sadness filled my breast as I looked in horror! What was that father doing in Jerusalem! Did he not know? Did he not care? Then a father and child on a hill looking at the horror below caught my eye—these had escaped, yet the child was asking the father the same question:

"What were you doing father, when the world as you knew it ended?"

"I fled child, the most important thing I could have been doing, and you are here because of it."

As I sat there reading that week's Come Follow Me (09/20/2023) it really hit me—do we really believe these events will transpire right as we hit the Book of Revelation? Do we really believe that the President of the Church will broadcast an announcement for that which we should already know and be doing? Will the President of the Church declare that all weddings, Come Follow Me curriculums, churches, etc. are to be cancelled because what is coming next? Or do we believe that we will be sitting in our chairs, studying something mundane like 2 Chronicles, giving and taking in marriage, going to the temple lot, etc. etc. when it all goes down? And what, is the question, what was I doing, when the world as I knew it ended… What do I want to say? When that child looks up at me in the eyes, what will I be able to say? Brothers and Sisters, with all the energy of my soul I plead with you to search out the answers to those questions, when your loved ones and posterity look up at you and ask:

"What were you doing, when the world as you knew it ended?"

I pray we can answer them with a smile on our faces, and tears of gratitude falling from our eyes. The "Day of Blood" will come, and our experience in that day will vary greatly depending on the choices we made yesterday.

**(24-34) True Prophets Are Never Popular with the Wicked**

> Jeremiah was a living prophet in his day. The evil people, particularly the leaders of Judah, cast aside his words as naught. He delivered the message that the Lord gave him, but he ended up in prison. Eventually he was driven out of Israel and compelled to live in Egypt. **President Ezra Taft Benson** has said:
>
> "As a prophet reveals the truth it divides the people. The honest in heart heed his words, but the unrighteous either ignore the prophet or fight him. When the prophet points out the sins of the world, the worldly either want to close the mouth of the prophet, or else act as if the prophet didn't exist, rather than repent of their sins. Popularity is never a test of truth. Many a prophet has been killed or cast out. As we come closer to the Lord's second coming, you can expect that as the people of the world become more wicked, the prophet will be less popular with them." ("Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophet," in *1980 Devotional Speeches of the Year* [Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1981], p. 29).
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 251)

**3 Nephi 6**

> **20** And there began to be men inspired from heaven and sent forth, standing among the people in all the land, preaching and testifying boldly of the sins and iniquities of the people, and testifying unto them concerning the redemption which the Lord would make for his people… and they did testify boldly…
>
> **21** Now there were many of the people who were exceedingly angry because of those who testified of these things; and those who were angry were chiefly the chief judges, and they who had been high priests and lawyers; yea, all those who were lawyers were angry with those who testified of these things.

**Moroni 9**

> **3** And now behold, my son, I fear lest the Lamanites shall destroy this people; for they do not repent, and Satan stirreth them up continually to anger one with another.
>
> **4** Behold, I am laboring with them continually; and when I speak the word of God with sharpness they tremble and anger against me; and when I use no sharpness they harden their hearts against it; wherefore, I fear lest the Spirit of the Lord hath ceased striving with them.
>
> **5** For so exceedingly do they anger that it seemeth me that they have no fear of death; and they have lost their love, one towards another; and they ***thirst after blood*** and revenge continually.
>
> **6** And now, my beloved son, notwithstanding their hardness, let us labor diligently; for if we should cease to labor, we should be brought under condemnation; for we have a labor to perform whilst in this tabernacle of clay, that we may conquer the enemy of all righteousness, and rest our souls in the kingdom of God.

**President Thomas S. Monson**

> We live in turbulent times. Often the future is unknown; therefore, it behooves us to prepare for uncertainties. When the time for decision arrives, the time for preparation is past.
>
> ("Are We Prepared?" *Ensign,* September 2014)

## Closing the Mouths of Watchmen

**President Thomas S. Monson**

> In the vicinity where I once lived and served, the Church operated a poultry project, staffed primarily by volunteers from the local wards. Most of the time it was an efficiently operated project, supplying to the bishops' storehouse thousands of fresh eggs and hundreds of pounds of dressed poultry. On a few occasions, however, being volunteer city farmers meant not only blisters on the hands but also frustration of heart and mind.
>
> For instance, I shall ever remember the time we gathered the Aaronic Priesthood young men to give the project a spring-cleaning. Our enthusiastic and energetic throng assembled at the project and in a speedy fashion uprooted, gathered, and burned large quantities of weeds and debris. By the light of the glowing bonfires, we ate hot dogs and congratulated ourselves on a job well done.
>
> However, there was just one disastrous problem. The noise and the fires so disturbed the fragile population of 5,000 laying hens that most of them went into a sudden molt and ceased laying. ***Thereafter we tolerated a few weeds so that we might produce more eggs."***
>
> ("Are We Prepared?" *Ensign,* September 2014)

**Elder David A. Bednar**

> "Some Church members opine that emergency plans and supplies, food storage, and 72-hour kits must not be important anymore ***because the Brethren have not spoken recently and extensively about these and related topics in general conference. But repeated admonitions to prepare have been proclaimed by leaders of the Church for decades. The consistency of prophetic counsel over time creates a powerful concert of clarity and a warning volume far louder than solo performances can ever produce."***
>
> (We Will Prove Them Herewith," General Conference, October 2020)

**Doctrine and Covenants 1**

> **37** Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them ***shall all be fulfilled.***

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> Why do we need such resilient faith? Because difficult days are ahead. Rarely in the future will it be easy or popular to be a faithful Latter-day Saint. Each of us will be tested. The Apostle Paul warned that in the latter days, those who diligently follow the Lord "shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12). That very persecution can either crush you into silent weakness or motivate you to be more exemplary and courageous in your daily lives.
>
> ("The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior's Second Coming," *Ensign,* April 2020)

**Heber C. Kimball**

> I want to say to you, my brethren, the time is coming when we will be mixed up in these now peaceful valleys to that extent that it will be difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God. Then, brethren, look out for the great sieve, for there will be a great sifting time, and many will fall; for I say unto you there is a test, a Test, a TEST coming, and who will be able to stand? This church has before it many close places through which it must pass before the work of God is crowned with victory. To meet the difficulties that are coming it will be necessary for you to have knowledge of the truth of this work for yourselves. The difficulties will be of such character that the man or woman who does not possess this personal knowledge or witness will fall. If you have not got the testimony, live right and call upon the Lord and cease not 'till you obtain it. If you do not, you will not stand.
>
> (Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball,* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1945, p. 446)

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

> Is it any wonder that we both rejoice and tremble at what lies ahead?
>
> Truly the world is and will be in commotion, but the Zion of God will be unmoved. The wicked and ungodly shall be swept from the Church, and the little stone will continue to grow until it fills the whole earth.
>
> The way ahead is dark and dreary and dreadful. There will yet be martyrs; the doors in Carthage shall again enclose the innocent. We have not been promised that the trials and evils of the world will entirely pass us by.
>
> ("The Coming Tests and Trials and Glory," General Conf., April 1980)

**Isaiah 30**

> **9** That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD:
>
> **10** Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:
>
> **11** Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.
>
> **12** Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon:
>
> **13** Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.
>
> **14** And he shall break it as the breaking of the potters' vessel that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit.
>
> **15** For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: ***and ye would not.***

**3 Nephi 26**

> **9** And when they shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things then shall the greater things be made manifest unto them.
>
> **10** And if it so be that they will not believe these things, ***then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation.***

**President Harold B. Lee**

> It is not to be thought that every word spoken by the General Authorities is inspired, or that they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost in everything they read and write. Now you keep that in mind. I don't care what his position is, if he writes something or speaks something that goes beyond anything that you can find in the standard church works… you may immediately say, "Well, that is his own idea." And if he says something that contradicts what is found in the standard church works (I think that is why we call them "standard"—it is the standard measure of all that men teach), you may know by the same token that it is false, regardless of the position of the man who says it.
>
> ("The Place of the Living Prophet, Seer and Revelator," address to Seminaries and Institutes of Religion Personnel, BYU, 8 July 1964, p. 14; Church CES Manual, Living Prophets For A Living Church, 1974, p. 66)

## Taken, Even That Which You Have

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> Our course of study for next year in *Come, Follow Me* is the Book of Mormon. You may wish to ponder important questions such as, "How would my life be different if my knowledge gained from the Book of Mormon were suddenly taken away?
>
> ("Closing Remarks," General Conference, October 2019)

**JESUS PROCLAIMED HIS MESSIAHSHIP IN THE BREAD OF LIFE SERMON**

> The day following the miracle of the five thousand, the same group of Jews appeared for another "handout." They apparently were not concerned with Jesus' message or his mission, except only as it satisfied their own physical desires. The sermon on the Bread of Life is highly spiritual. To be understood, its message must be carefully studied and pondered.
>
> (*The Life And Teachings Of Jesus And His Apostles,* p. 91)

**(12-7) John 6:66. Why Did So Many of Jesus' Disciples Turn from Him Following the Sermon on the Bread of Life?**

> Consider these words from **President David O. McKay** as they apply to all who would be disciples of our Savior:
>
> "[The sermon on the Bread of Life as recorded by John] is highly spiritual, and contains references about Christ as the 'Bread of Life,' which His followers could not believe. They could not comprehend what He was saying, and many of them walked away. … The twelve … slightly glimpsed the spiritual significance of that sermon. … Those apostles had that day the power and privilege of making a choice—whether they would walk with those who were impressed only with the physical favors, advantages, which nature could give, or whether their gifts heed to the spiritual in man. … Such a decision may determine whether one responds to the call of one's soul to rise, or yields to the tendency to grovel. … The disciples of Jesus glimpsed a light that would enlighten their souls spiritually as the sun replaces darkness with beams of light. ***But there are few persons who see that Light or even believe in the fuller life, and often after glimpsing it, they turn away to the grosser and more sordid things."*** ("Whither Shall We Go?," Speeches of the Year, 1961, pp. 2–4)
>
> (*The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ and His Apostles,* p. 90)

**John 6 (JST)**

> **58** This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.
>
> **59** These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.
>
> **60** Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?
>
> **61** When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?
>
> **62** What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?
>
> **63** It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

**64** But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

**65** And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me except he doeth the will of my Father who hath sent me.

**66** ¶ From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

**67** Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

**68** Then *Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.*

**To whom was Hebrews written and why?**

Under the pressure of various afflictions, many of these Jewish Christians were withdrawing from the Church and returning to the relative safety of Jewish worship at the synagogue (see Hebrews 10:25, 38–39). One reason that the book of Hebrews was written was to encourage Jewish converts to remain faithful to Jesus Christ and not revert to their former way of life (see Hebrews 10:32–38).

(*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), Chapter 48: Hebrews 1–6)

**46 "Let Us Go On Unto Perfection"**

Perfection is obtained by complying with the requirements of the everlasting gospel as revealed by Jesus Christ.

How often have you excused an act of personal disobedience with the words, "Oh well, nobody's perfect." Or how many times have you dismissed the good intent or actions of someone else with a sarcastic retort, "We can't all be perfect, you know."

(*The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ and His Apostles,* p. 381)

These words are a huge concept that I've been wrestling with as I write this chapter, and everyone else will wrestle with as they read this chapter—A Day of Blood. It is a wrestle between the natural man who fears upsetting friends, family and loved ones versus a love of God. When one preaches a standard long enough, when one raises an ensign high enough, long enough, one will lose friendships! There is a "day of blood" for us, a "day of separation," a price to be paid!

**2 Nephi 28**

**30** For behold, thus saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have.

**Proverbs 26**

**11** As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly.

**12** Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

**13** The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Repent, repent, is the voice of God to Zion; and strange as it may appear, yet it is true, ***mankind will persist in self-justification until all their iniquity is exposed, and their character past being redeemed,*** and that which is treasured up in their hearts be exposed to the gaze of mankind. I say to you (and what I say to you I say to all), hear the warning voice of God, lest Zion fall, and the Lord swear in His wrath the inhabitants of Zion shall not enter into His rest.

("A Warning to Zion," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp.18–19)

The lines, "no one is perfect," "the Lord doesn't expect me to sacrifice everything," "we all can't be perfect," etc. are all phrases of, "I have enough," "I have become enough," etc. They are phrases of self-justification! They are phrases of defeat… And they are used to shield people from the cold harsh reality of what the consequences of their choices really bought them and their families. A cold harsh reality that is unescapable.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

I will give you one of the Keys of the mysteries of the Kingdom. It is an eternal principle, that has existed with God from all eternity: That man who rises up to condemn others, finding fault with the Church, saying that they are out of the way, while he himself is righteous, then know assuredly, that that man is in the high road to apostasy; and if he does not repent, will apostatize, as God lives. The principle is as correct as the one that Jesus put forth in saying that he who seeketh a sign is an adulterous person; and that principle is eternal, undeviating, and firm as the pillars of heaven; for whenever you see a man seeking after a sign, you may set it down that he is an adulterous man.

("A Key to Mysteries," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp.156–157)

This principle is always true for it is based on universal truth. If someone doesn't want to make changes in their lives, if they are ***self-justifying away the need for action*** (i.e., "My Savior will save me ***in my sins! Despite my actions!"***), and there are people in their lives raising that ensign high—they are holding true to the Lord's standards, they are 'Thinking Celestial', etc.—the first thing people do is start tearing those people down. They have to now self-justify the removal of this person from their lives, because having this person in their lives is now just a reminder of their failures, a reminder of their own personal lack of sacrifice. They will start with statements such as these, "Oh no one is perfect," or "We all can't be perfect," etc. But these are simply seeds that are designed to grow into resentment towards the individual, and unless they repent, there will be apostasy, there will be separation of friendship. The only other option is to lower the standard, to bring yourself down to their level, to self-justify away the need to sacrifice all things, etc.

This is a huge reason why the day of blood will be so terrible; this is why prophets and Apostles have warned of the need for strength to endure that day. "Difficult days are ahead…" Are we prepared for the days of blood? Or will we self-justify until the day of our character is passed being redeemed?

## God Hates the Sinner, Loves Those Who Serve Him

**Elder Bruce R McConkie**

Anger

As with nearly all strong emotions or passions, anger is manifest both in righteousness and in unrighteousness. Always there is a sense of displeasure attending it, and usually this is accompanied by a feeling of antagonism, excited by a sense of injury or insult.

Righteous anger is an attribute of Deity. His anger is everlastingly kindled against the wicked. (D. & C. 1:13; 5:8; 60:2; 63:11, 32; 84:24.)

(*Mormon Doctrine,* 2nd ed., p. 37)

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

Hatred. See LOVE, PERSECUTvION.

Hate is the opposite of love; in its full force it is to abhor, abominate, and detest; in lesser degree it is merely to dislike or regard with displeasure. Hatred is a proper and holy. emotion when channeled properly. "Hate the evil, and love the good." (Amos 5: 15.)

Manifestations of perfect hatred are shown forth by Deity himself. "I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery," he says. (Isa. 61 :8.) One of the best statements in the proverbs is: "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." (Prov. 6:16–19.)

(*Mormon Doctrine,* 2nd ed., p. 344)

**James E. Talmage**

The incident of Christ's forcible clearing of the temple is a contradiction of the traditional conception of Him as of One so gentle and unassertive in demeanor as to appear unmanly. Gentle He was, and patient under affliction, merciful and long-suffering in dealing with contrite sinners, yet stern and inflexible in the presence of hypocrisy, and unsparing in His denunciation of persistent evil-doers.

His mood was adapted to the conditions to which He addressed Himself; tender words of encouragement or burning expletives of righteous indignation issued with equal fluency from His lips. His nature was no poetic conception of cherubic sweetness ever present, but that of a Man, with the emotions and passions essential to manhood and manliness. He, who often wept with compassion, at other times evinced in word and action the righteous anger of a God. But of all His passions, however gently they rippled or strongly surged, He was ever master.

(*Jesus The Christ,* Chapter 12)

**Elder Dallin H. Oaks**

Some seem to value God's love because of their hope that His love is so great and so unconditional that it will mercifully excuse them from obeying His laws. In contrast, those who understand God's plan for His children know that God's laws are invariable, which is another great evidence of His love for His children. Mercy cannot rob justice, and those who obtain mercy are "they who have kept the covenant and observed the commandment" (D&C 54:6).

***We read again and again in the Bible and in modern scriptures of God's anger with the wicked and of His acting in His wrath against those who violate His laws. How are anger and wrath evidence of His love?*** Joseph Smith taught that God "institute[d] laws whereby [the spirits that He would send into the world] could have a privilege to advance like himself." God's love is so perfect that He lovingly requires us to obey His commandments because He knows that only through obedience to His laws can we become perfect, as He is. ***For this reason, God's anger and His wrath are not a contradiction of His love but an evidence of His love.***

God's choicest blessings are clearly contingent upon obedience to God's laws and commandments. The key teaching is from modern revelation:

"And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated" (D&C 130:20–21)."

("Love and Law," General Conference, October 2009)

**Psalms 5 (JST)**

**3** My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.

**4** For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee.

**5** The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: ***thou hatest all workers of iniquity.***

**6** Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.

**7** But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.

**Helaman 15**

**3** Yea, wo unto this people who are called the people of Nephi except they shall repent, when they shall see all these signs and wonders which shall be showed unto them; for behold, they have been a chosen people of the Lord; yea, the people of Nephi hath he loved, and also hath he chastened them; yea, in the days of their iniquities hath he chastened them because he loveth them.

**4** But behold my brethren, ***the Lamanites hath he hated because their deeds have been evil continually, and this because of the iniquity of the tradition of their fathers.***

**John 3 (JST)**

**16** ¶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

**17** For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

**18** ¶ He who believeth on him is not condemned; but he who believeth not is condemned already because he hath not believed on the name of the Only Begotten Son of God, which before was preached by the mouth of the holy prophets; for they testified of me.

**19** And this is the condemnation: that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.

**20** For every one who doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

**21** But he who loveth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest.

**22** And he who obeyeth the truth, the works which he doeth, they are of God.

**Matthew 6 (JST)**

**23** But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light which is in thee be darkness, how great shall that darkness be.

**24** ¶ No man can serve two masters: for either he will ***hate the one,*** and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

**25** And, again I say unto you, go ye into the world, and care not for the world; ***for the world will hate you, and will persecute you***...

Light loves Light ***and hates Darkness.***

Darkness loves Darkness ***and hates Light.***

**2 Nephi 9**

**41** O then, my beloved brethren, come unto the Lord, the Holy One. Remember that his paths are righteous. Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name.

**42** And whoso knocketh, to him will he open; and the wise, and the learned, and they that are rich, who are puffed up because of their learning, and their wisdom, and their riches—***yea, they are they whom he despiseth;*** and save they shall cast these things away, and consider themselves fools before God, and come down in the depths of humility, he will not open unto them.

## Much Given, Much Required

**Luke 12**

**43** Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

**44** Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

**45** But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

**46** The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, ***and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.***

**47** And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

**48** But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

**D&C 75:22. Why Will It Be More Tolerable for the Heathen Than for Those Who Reject the Missionaries?**

**Elder James E. Talmage** noted that "man will be accounted blameless or guilty, according to his deeds as interpreted in the light of the law under which he is required to live. It is inconsistent with our conception of a just God, to believe Him capable of inflicting condemnation upon any one for noncompliance with a requirement of which the person had no knowledge. Nevertheless, the laws of the Church will not be suspended even in the case of those who have sinned in darkness and ignorance; but it is reasonable to believe that the plan of redemption will afford such benighted ones an opportunity of learning the laws of God; and surely, as fast as they so learn, will obedience be required on pain of the penalty." (*Articles of Faith,* p. 519.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 157)

**Doctrine and Covenants 82**

**3** For of him unto whom much is given much is required; and he who sins against the greater light shall receive the greater condemnation.

**4** Ye call upon my name for revelations, and I give them unto you; and inasmuch as ye keep not my sayings, which I give unto you, ye become transgressors; and justice and judgment are the penalty which is affixed unto my law.

**(G-6) How Should One Respond to Law?**

The Doctrine and Covenants teaches that the Latter-day Saints have a particular responsibility to live their lives according to the principles of righteousness, for they live in the dispensation of the fulness of times in which God has restored and brought together the keys, power, and knowledge of all dispensations (see D&C 27:12–13; 128:18). "Every key, power, and authority ever dispensed from heaven to men on earth, which is necessary for their eternal salvation, has already been restored in this dispensation" (McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine,* p. 200). The Latter-day Saints are the recipients of those great blessings, and the Lord has said that where "much is given much is required" (D&C 82:3).

**Elder George Albert Smith** explained the nature of the responsibility that falls on the Latter-day Saints as a result of what they have been given: "We will not be judged as our brothers and sisters of the world are judged, but according to the greater opportunities placed in our keeping. We will be among those who have received the word of the Lord, who have heard His sayings, and if we do them it will be to us eternal life, but if we fail condemnation will result." (In Conference Report, Oct. 1906, p. 47.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 396)

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

**34** And again, verily I say unto you, that which is governed by law is also preserved by law and perfected and sanctified by the same.

**35** That which breaketh a law, and abideth not by law, but seeketh to become a law unto itself, and willeth to abide in sin, and altogether abideth in sin, cannot be sanctified by law, neither by mercy, justice, nor judgment. Therefore, they must remain filthy still.

**36** All kingdoms have a law given;

**37** And there are many kingdoms; for there is no space in the which there is no kingdom; and there is no kingdom in which there is no space, either a greater or a lesser kingdom.

**38** And unto every kingdom is given a law; and unto every law there are certain bounds also and conditions.

**39** All beings who abide not in those conditions are not justified.

## Few That Please God

**Doctrine and Covenants 76**

**109** But behold, and lo, we saw the glory and the inhabitants of the telestial world, ***that they were as [a]innumerable as the stars in the firmament of heaven, or as the sand upon the seashore;***

**Footnote 109a innumerable**

**Matthew 7**

13 ¶ Enter ye in at the strait gate: ***for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:***

**Elder James E. Faust**

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** explains, "This distinction between *eternal life,* as received by the faithful, and *immortality,* obtained by both the faithful and unfaithful, is shown in the words of the Lord to Moses: 'For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality *and* eternal life of man.' The conjunction clearly separates the two thoughts. It explains that the Lord is giving ***to the vast majority of men,*** those who will not be obedient, the blessing of immortality; and to those who will serve him, the blessing of eternal life." (*The Way to Perfection,* Salt Lake City: The Genealogical Society of Utah, 1946, p. 329.)"

("The Supernal Gift of the Atonement," General Conf., Oct. 1988)

**Brigham Young**

I sometimes feel that I can hardly desist from telling the Latter-day Saints how they should live, but my talking organs will not permit me to say as much as I wish to. The Celestial Kingdom of God is worth seeking for, and there are times when I see the importance of the people living their religion that I almost feel to cry aloud and spare not, if I had the strength to do it. When I consider the greatness of the kingdom of God, and the privilege afforded us of becoming heirs to God our Father, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ our elder brother, and then sense the condition of the Latter-day Saints, I do not wonder that the question was asked of the Savior by his disciples: "Who, then, can be saved?" ***There are very few of the children of Father Adam and Mother Eve, who will be prepared to go into the Celestial Kingdom.*** Those who prepare themselves here, below, through obedience to the Gospel, receiving through their faithfulness the keys of the Priesthood, and sanctifying themselves through the truth, they are preparing themselves to become the sons of God. If we become the sons of God, we shall be joint heirs with Jesus Christ to all the inheritances that the Father hath prepared for the faithful. ***But there are few of all the human family that will ever attain to this highest state of glory.***

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 18, Discourse 26)

**Brigham Young**

Now, it is for you and me to prepare to return back again; not to our fatherland, in many cases, but to return east, and by-and-by to build up the Center Stake of Zion. We are not prepared to do this now, but

we are here to learn until we are of one heart and of one mind in the things of this life. Do all the Latter-day Saints arrive at this? No; they have not, our former experience has proved this. Of the great many who have been baptized into this Church, ***but few*** have been able to abide the word of the Lord; they have fallen out on the right and on the left, and have foundered by the way, and ***a few*** have gathered together. Will these be prepared to enter the celestial kingdom? ***Some of them will be,*** and will become kings and priests; ***but not all of these, only a portion of them.*** They do not know what to do with the revelations, commandments, and blessings of God. Talking, for instance, about everyday things, how many do we see here that know what to do with money and property when they get it? Are their eyes single to the building up of the kingdom of God? No; they are single to the building up of themselves. With all the knowledge that Elders have obtained who have traveled in the Church five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, or thirty years, there are few who understand the principles of the kingdom and whose eyes are single to the building of it up in all respects; but their eyes are like the fool's eye—looking to the ends of the earth. They want this and that, and they do not know what to do; they lack wisdom. ***By-and-by, perhaps, their wealth will depart from them, and when left poor and penniless, they will humble themselves before the Lord that they may be saved.***

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 11, Discourse 47, p. 324)

**Hugh Nibley**

Speaking to the Mormon Battalion in 1848, President Young warned them: "If we were to go to San Francisco and dig up chunks of gold or find it here in the valley it would ruin us. Many wanted to unite Babylon and Zion; it's the love of money that hurts them." In his last public address, he noted that because they are still "lusting ... after the things of this world, [the Latter-day Saints] are ... shaking hands with the servants of the devil, instead of sanctifying themselves. ... When I think upon this subject, I want the tongues of seven thunders to wake up the people." Even though the Lord said, "Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom; otherwise I cannot receive her unto myself" (D&C 105:5), the Latter-day Saints still wanted to compromise and say,

"We will not go up unto Zion, and will keep our moneys"—but as long as that was their plan, there could be no Zion: "Mine elders should wait for ... the redemption of Zion" (D&C 105:8–9). For God had made it perfectly clear: "I give not unto you that ye shall live after the manner of the world" (D&C 95:13). "For after today cometh the burning. ... I will burn them up ... and I will not spare any that remain in Babylon" (D&C 64:24). It had to be the one or the other.

"Shall we now seek to make ourselves wealthy in gold and silver and the possessions which the wicked love and worship, or shall we, with all of our might, mind, and strength, seek diligently first to build up the Kingdom of God? Let us decide on this, and do the one thing or the other." Notice that every time the issue is raised, it is made clear that the powerful link that continues to bind the Mormons to the world and that advocates the perverse doctrine of a deal between Zion and Babylon is a deep-seated desire of the Saints to acquire personal wealth Joseph Smith's speech at Far West is a vividly specific statement of the case: Brethren, we are gathering to this buitiful land to build up Zion. ... But since I have been here I perseive the spirit of selfishness, coveteousness exists in the hearts of the saints. ... Here are those who begin to spread out, buying up all the land they are able to do; ... thinking to ley foundations for themselves only, looking to their own individual familys. ... Now I want to tell you that Zion cannot be built up in eny such way. ... I see signs put out, Beer signs, speculative scheems are being introduced. This is the ways of the world—Babylon indeed, and I tell you in the name of the God of Israel, if thare is not repentance ... you will be Broken up and scattered from this choice land [sic].

We all know that this prophecy was literally fulfilled: God would not tolerate such a mockery of Zion. We cannot compromise between the way of Babylon and the way of Zion, because they do lead in opposite directions, as Brigham Young explains: "I am sorry that this people are worldly-minded. ... Their affections are upon ... their farms, upon their property, their houses and possessions, and in the same ratio that this is the case, the Holy Spirit of God—the spirit of their calling—forsakes them, and they are overcome with the spirit of the evil one."

Every step in the direction of increasing one's personal holdings is a step away from Zion, which is another way of saying, as the Lord has proclaimed in various ways, that one cannot serve two masters: to the degree in which he loves the one he will hate the other, and so it is with God and business, for mammon is simply the standard Hebrew word for any kind of financial dealing.

(*Approaching Zion,* p. 37)

**Doctrine and Covenants 121**

**34** Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?

**35** Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world

**Doctrine and Covenants 76**

**102** Last of all, these all are they ***who will not be gathered with the saints,*** to be caught up unto the church of the Firstborn, and received into the cloud.

**Matthew 5 (JST)**

**5** ¶ Verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you to be the salt of the earth; but if the salt shall lose its savour, wherewith shall the earth be salted? ***The salt shall thenceforth be good for nothing, but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men.***

**Matthew 5:13. "If the Salt Have Lost His Savour"**

In addition to its uses in flavoring and preserving food, salt was added to sacrificial offerings under the law of Moses. Thus salt was associated with joy, permanence, and covenant making. When Jesus admonished disciples to be the "salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13), part of the meaning was that their lives should reflect their covenants with the Lord and serve as a preservative for the world in general. **Elder Carlos E. Asay** (1926–99) of the Presidency of the Seventy explained that salt loses its savor by contamination and that we keep our "savor" by avoiding spiritual contamination. Though directed specifically to priesthood holders, Elder Asay's words have application to each of us:

"A world-renowned chemist told me that salt will not lose its savor with age. ***Savor is lost through mixture and contamination. Similarly, priesthood power does not dissipate with age; it, too, is lost through mixture and contamination."*** ("Salt of the Earth: Savor of Men and Saviors of Men," *Ensign,* May 1980, 42–43).

(*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), Chapter 3: Matthew 5–7)

**Hugh Nibley**

There is an unbridgeable gap between Zion and Babylon. We cannot compromise on the two ways, because the two ways lead in opposite directions. In recent years, the course of the whole world has suddenly and dramatically vindicated the position taken by the early saints and largely forgotten by their descendants. We are discovering that there really are two worlds; that the one leads to sure destruction written in capital letters on everything we behold, as Joseph Smith put it,22 and only the other offers salvation. This is the ancient doctrine of the "Two Ways" taught in the early church—the way of darkness and the way of light. It was impossible to try to compromise between them because they led in opposite directions. Yet in the ancient church, it was the compromisers, the dyophysites, who won. ***When we try to mix Zion and Babylon, Babylon has already won the game.*** It is amazing that any teaching so fundamental and so clear-cut could be so effectively

silenced today among people professing to preach and to practice the restored gospel. …

One may well ask if it is necessary to choose between such absolute extremes, and wonder if there is not some more moderate approach to the problems. By the very nature of things, there is no third way—as the early Jewish and Christian writers remind us repeatedly in their doctrine of the Two Ways. According to this oldest and best-established of teachings (though quite unpopular with the conventional Christianity and Judaism of our time), there are Two Ways lying before every person in this life, the Way of Light and the Way of Darkness, the Way of Life and the Way of Death; and every mortal every day of his life is required to make a choice between them. Unfortunately for our peace of mind, any compromise between the Two Ways is out of the question, since they lead in opposite directions. As the wise Heraclitus pointed out long ago, "The up-road and the down-road are one and the same."7 Which one you are on depends entirely on the way you are facing. To go off at an angle is to get nowhere; if you find the road to Zion, the Heavenly City, too steep, you may mitigate the climb by striking off on a more level course—but in that case you will never, never reach Zion. The only road to Zion is the shortest road, for to take any other shows a lack of faith and zeal, which will exclude you from the city.

As there is no compromise between the Two Ways, so there is no mixing of Babylon and Zion; God will not tolerate any concessions by Zion: "A scourge and judgment [is] to be poured out upon the children of Zion. For shall the children of the kingdom pollute my holy land?" (D&C 84:58–59). Zion does not make war on Babylon: "I forgive all men. I feel in my heart to forgive all men in the broad sense that God requires me to forgive all men, and I desire to love my neighbor as myself; and to this extent I bear no malice toward any of the children of my Father. … I leave them in the hands of the just Judge. Let him deal with them as seemeth him good. … I would not harm a hair of their heads." We don't need to. Zion has never made war on Babylon, for when the environment has become too foul for Zion, she has simply been removed. Babylon is always reserved for the burning—she is never converted or reformed; though many may leave her for Zion, her fate is to be overthrown, violently, suddenly, unexpectedly, and completely by the direct intervention of God. "Thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: … thou shalt not be able to put it off, and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know" (Isaiah 47:11). "Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed; howl for her. … We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her" (Jeremiah 51:8–9).

(*Approaching Zion*)

**POINTS TO PONDER**

### (46-25) Perfection Is an Achievable Goal When the Formula Revealed by Christ Is Complied With

"Progress toward eternal life is a matter of achieving perfection. Living all the commandments guarantees total forgiveness of sins and assures one of exaltation through that perfection which comes by complying with the formula the Lord gave us. In his Sermon on the Mount he made the command to all men: 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' (Matt. 5:48.) Being perfect means to triumph over sin. This is a mandate from the Lord. He is just and wise and kind. He would never require anything from his children which was not for their benefit and which was not attainable. Perfection therefore is an achievable goal." (Kimball, *Miracle of Forgiveness,* pp. 208–9.)

### (46-26) The Greatest Hindrance to Perfection Is Procrastination

"There are even ***many members of the Church*** who are lax and careless and who continually procrastinate. They live the gospel casually but not devoutly. They have complied with some requirements but are not valiant. They do no major crime but merely fail to do the things required—things like paying tithing, living the Word of Wisdom, having family prayers, fasting, attending meetings, serving. Perhaps they do not consider such omissions to be sins, yet these were the kinds of things of which the five foolish virgins of Jesus' parable were probably guilty. The ten virgins belonged to the kingdom and had every right to the blessings—except that five were not valiant and were not ready when the great day came. They were unprepared through not living all the commandments. They were bitterly disappointed at being shut out from the marriage—as likewise their modern counterparts will be. …

"Because men are prone to postpone action and ignore directions, the Lord has repeatedly given strict injunctions and issued solemn warnings. Again and again in different phraseology and throughout the centuries the Lord has reminded man so that he could never have excuse. And the burden of ***the prophetic warning has been that the time to act is now, in this mortal life.*** One cannot with impunity delay his compliance with God's commandments." (Kimball, *Miracle of Forgiveness,* pp. 7–10.)

### (46-27) The Time to Begin the Process of Becoming Perfect Is Now

"… when we go out of this life, leave this body, we will desire to do many things that we cannot do at all without the body. We will be seriously handicapped, and we will long for the body, we will pray for that early reunion with our bodies. We will know then what advantage it is to have a body.

"Then, every man and woman who is putting off until the next life the task of correcting and overcoming the weakness of the flesh are sentencing themselves to years of bondage, for no man or woman will come forth in the resurrection until they have completed their work, until they have overcome, until they have done as much as they can do.

"… The point I have in mind is that we are sentencing ourselves to long periods of bondage, separating our spirits from our bodies, or we are shortening that period, according to the way in which we overcome and master ourselves." (Ballard, *Three Degrees of Glory,* pp. 14–15.)

### (46-28) Deep, Abiding Testimony Is of Greatest Assistance in Becoming Perfect

PERFECTION RESTS ON FOLLOWING GOSPEL PRINCIPLES

Perfection is attained only on the principles laid down in the gospel of Christ. As the author of our salvation, Jesus has a perfect right to prescribe the conditions of salvation. This he has done in what we call the gospel of Jesus Christ. As propounded by Christ, the gospel has principles and ordinances which must be complied with in order to merit eternal blessings.

(*The Life and Teachings of Jesus and His Apostles,* pp. 386–387)

**The Power for Attaining Perfection Is in Christ**

As you exercise personal self-discipline and call upon the Lord for strength, he answers. Knowing this, the prophet Moroni wrote the inspiring words found in Moroni 10:32, 33. Read them with the understanding that they are for you. They are your personal promise.

(*The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ and His Apostles,* pp. 386–387)

**Moroni 10**

**31** And awake, and arise from the dust, O Jerusalem; yea, and put on thy beautiful garments, O daughter of Zion; and strengthen thy stakes and enlarge thy borders forever, that thou mayest no more be confounded, that the covenants of the Eternal Father which he hath made unto thee, O house of Israel, may be fulfilled.

**32** Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God.

**33** And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through

the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot.

**The Power for Attaining Perfection Is in Christ** (Cont.)

In Christ you really can become perfect. Again note the promise of the Lord to you as recorded in D&C 93:20.

(*The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ and His Apostles,* p. 387)

**Doctrine and Covenants 93**

**19** I give unto you these sayings that you may understand and know how to worship, and know what you worship, that you may come unto the Father in my name, and in due time ***receive of his fulness.***

**20** For if you keep my commandments you shall ***receive of his fulness,*** and be glorified in me as I am in the Father; therefore, I say unto you, you shall receive grace for grace.

**21** And now, verily I say unto you, I was in the beginning with the Father, and am the Firstborn;

**22** And all those who are begotten through me are partakers of the glory of the same, ***and are the church of the Firstborn.***

**The Power for Attaining Perfection Is in Christ** (Cont.)

What does the Lord mean when he states you will receive a fulness? Do you think he would give you a fulness of this power and glory if you are unworthy to receive it?

(*The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ and His Apostles,* p. 387)

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

**3** Wherefore, I now send upon you another Comforter, even upon you my friends, that it may abide in your hearts, ***even the Holy Spirit of promise;*** which other Comforter is the same that I promised unto my disciples, as is recorded in the testimony of John.

**4** ***This Comforter is the promise which I give unto you of eternal life, even the glory of the celestial kingdom;***

**5** ***Which glory is that of the church of the Firstborn, even of God, the holiest of all, through Jesus Christ his Son***—

**Elder D. Todd Christofferson**

It is also the Holy Ghost, in His character as the Holy Spirit of Promise, that confirms the validity and efficacy of your covenants and seals God's promises upon you.[5]

**Footnote 5.**

***In the Kirtland Temple dedicatory prayer referenced earlier, the Prophet petitioned, "And do thou grant, Holy Father, that all those who shall worship in this house … may grow up in thee,*** and receive a fulness of the Holy Ghost" (D&C 109:14–15). The "fulness of the Holy Ghost" ***includes what Jesus described as "the promise which I give unto you of eternal life,*** even the glory of the celestial kingdom; which glory is that of the church of the Firstborn, even of God, the holiest of all, through Jesus Christ his Son" (D&C 88:4–5).

("The Power of Covenants," General Conference, April 2009)

**The Power for Attaining Perfection Is in Christ** (Finishing)

Do you think the Lord would excuse you if in mortality you did not climb as high on the ladder of perfection as it is possible for you to do? Ponder these words of **Elder Joseph Fielding Smith**:

"It is our duty to be better today than we were yesterday, and better tomorrow than we are today. Why? Because we are on that road, if we are keeping the commandments of the Lord, we are on that road to perfection, and that can only come through obedience and the desire in our hearts to overcome the world." (*Doctrines of Salvation,* 2:18–19.)

(*The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ and His Apostles,* p. 388)

**Matthew 22**

**13** Then said the king unto his servants, ***Bind him hand and foot, and take and cast him away into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.***

**14** For many are called, but few chosen; wherefore, all do not have on the wedding garment.

**15** ¶ Then went the Pharisees and took counsel how they might entangle him in talk.

**16** And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any; for thou regardest not the person of men.

**17** Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?

**(16-37) Isaiah 45:23. What Does It Mean to Say "Every Knee Shall Bow, Every Tongue Swear"?**

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** said:

"I want to call attention to something that is stated frequently in the scriptures, and I think very often misunderstood, and that is the statement that, 'every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess.' [Isaiah 45:23; Romans 14:10–11; Philippians 2:9–11; D&C 76:110; 88:104] I wonder how many of us have an idea that if a knee bows and a tongue confesses, that is a sign of forgiveness of sin and freedom from sin, ***and that the candidate is prepared for exaltation? If you do, you make a mistake. It does not mean that at all.***

"The time will come when 'every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess,' ***and yet the vast majority of mankind will go into the telestial kingdom eternally.*** Let me read these verses: 'The time shall come when all shall see the salvation of the Lord; when every nation, kindred, tongue, and people shall see eye to eye and shall confess before God that his judgments are just.' [Mosiah 16:1–4.]

"It is a wonderful thing when men reach the stage when they will be willing to confess that the judgments against them are just, and they will bow the knee and will understand 'eye to eye.'" (*Doctrines of Salvation,* 2:30.)

Isaiah's intent was to assure all the world, both the wicked and the righteous, that Jesus Christ is the God of Israel and that one day all will be constrained to recognize that fact, whether or not they are or have been His disciples.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 187)

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

***Most of the adult people who have lived from the day of Adam to the present time will go to the telestial kingdom.*** The inhabitants of this lowest kingdom of glory will be "as innumerable as the stars in the firmament of heaven, or as the sand upon the seashore." They will be the endless hosts of people of all ages who have lived after the manner of the world; who have been carnal, sensual, and devilish; who have chosen the vain philosophies of the world rather than accept the testimony of Jesus; who have been liars and thieves, sorcerers, and adulterers, blasphemers and murderers. (D&C 76: 81–112; Reve 22: 15.)

(*Mormon Doctrine,* "Telestial Kingdom")

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Thus after this chosen family had rejected Christ and His proposals, the heralds of salvation said to them, "Lo we turn unto the Gentiles;" and the Gentiles received the covenant, and were grafted in from whence the chosen family were broken off; but the Gentiles have not continued in the goodness of God, but have departed from the faith that was once delivered to the Saints, and have broken the covenant in which their fathers were established (see Isaiah 24:5); and have become high-mind-

ed, and have not feared; therefore, ***but few of them will be gathered with the chosen family.***

("The Covenant to the Gentiles," *TPJS,* pp. 13–18)

**People on the Earth during the Millennium**

- Who will be on the earth during the Millennium?

A thousand years of peace, love, and joy will begin on the earth at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. This thousand-year period is called the Millennium. The scriptures and the prophets help us understand what it will be like to live on the earth during the Millennium.

Because of the destruction of the wicked at the Savior's Second Coming, only righteous people will live on the earth at the beginning of the Millennium. They will be those who have lived virtuous and honest lives. ***These people will inherit either the terrestrial or celestial kingdom.***

(*Gospel Principles* (2011), Chapter 45: The Millennium)

**(14-7) Isaiah 13:11–12. What Was Implied by a Man Being More Precious Than Gold?**

In chapter 13, verses 11–12, Isaiah repeats a refrain used earlier (see Isaiah 4:1), that righteous men will become as difficult to find as precious gold and will be treasured as highly. The wicked will be cleansed from the earth, and the worthy righteous will remain to become the precious jewels in the royal diadem of the Lord (see D&C 60:4; Isaiah 62:1–3). Indeed, the treasure of "the golden wedge of Ophir" (Isaiah 13:12), the rich, gold-producing province of India, is insignificant compared to the worth of one righteous man (compare D&C 18:10).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 153)

## Upon My House; Like a Whirlwind; By the Angels

**Doctrine and Covenants 112**

**24** Behold, vengeance cometh speedily upon the inhabitants of the earth, a day of wrath, a day of burning, a day of desolation, of weeping, of mourning, and of lamentation; and as a whirlwind it shall come upon all the face of the earth, saith the Lord.

**25** ***And upon my house shall it begin, and from my house shall it go forth, saith the Lord;***

**26** First among those among you, saith the Lord, who have professed to know my name and have not known me, and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house, saith the Lord.

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

As the Hebrew Saints knew, ***the Lord's house anciently was his people, his congregation, his saints,*** concerning which he said:

"My servant Moses ... is faithful in all mine house." (Numbers 12:7.)

Now Paul is saying that the Meridian Saints are the Lord's house, among whom is Christ the Lord who excels even Moses in glory and greatness. Moses was the servant in the house for his day and age, but Christ is the Son who made the house and whose it is.

(*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* Vol. 3)

**Abomination of Desolation**

Daniel spoke prophetically of a day when there would be "the abomination that maketh desolate" (Dan. 11:31; 12:11), and the phrase was recoined in New Testament times to say "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet" (Matt. 24:15).

Conditions of desolation, born of abomination and wickedness, were to occur *twice* in fulfillment of Daniel's words. The first was to be when the Roman legions under Titus, in A.D. 70, laid siege to Jerusalem (Matt. 24:15; JS—M 1:12).

Speaking of the last days, of the days following the Restoration of the gospel and its declaration "for a witness unto all nations," our Lord said: "And again shall the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, be fulfilled" (JS—M 1:31–32). That is, [The Lord's House] again will be under siege.

In a general sense, abomination of desolation also describes the latter-day judgments to be poured out upon the wicked wherever they may be. And so that the honest in heart may escape these things, the Lord sends His servants forth to raise the warning voice, to declare the glad tidings of the Restoration, lest "desolation and utter abolishment" come upon them. The elders are commanded to reprove "the world in righteousness of all their unrighteous and ungodly deeds, setting forth clearly and understandingly the desolation of abomination in the last days" (D&C 84:114, 117; 88:84–85).

("Abomination of desolation," *Bible Dictionary*)

**Daniel 11**

**31** And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, ***and shall take away the daily sacrifice,*** and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.

**Daniel 12**

**11** And ***from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away,*** and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

**Matthew 24**

**15** When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, ***stand in the holy place,*** (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

**30** And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

**31** And there shall be men standing in that generation, that shall not pass until they shall see an overflowing scourge; for a desolating sickness shall cover the land.

**32** ***But my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved;*** but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die.

**33** And there shall be earthquakes also in divers places, and many desolations; yet men will harden their hearts against me, and they will take up the sword, one against another, and they will kill one another.

**Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:12; Matthew 24:15. "Stand in the Holy Place"**

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, referring to the events leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, stated that ***"the counsel that the saints should then 'stand in the holy place' meant that they should assemble together where they could receive prophetic guidance that would preserve them from the desolations of the day"*** (*The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary,* 4 vols. [1979–81], 3:430).

Modern scriptures refer to standing in "holy places" (D&C 87:8; 101:22).

(*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), Chapter 8)

**Elder Orson Pratt**

***"And upon my house shall it begin, and from my house shall it go forth,*** saith the Lord; First among those among you, saith the Lord, who have professed to know my name and have not known me, and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house, saith the Lord."

I will make a few remarks upon these passages as I read them. It seems that this is a dispensation peculiar in its nature, differing from former dispensations. ***It is a dispensation of mercy and of judgment—of mercy to those who receive the message of mercy, but of judgment to those who reject that message.*** In other words it is a dispensation in which the Gospel has been revealed from heaven, the servants of God called to labor in the vineyard for the last time, and in which the Lord intends to pour out great and terrible judgments upon the nations of the wicked after they have been warned by the sound of the everlasting Gospel. We are told in the revelation I have just read, that vengeance cometh speedily upon the inhabitants of the earth; that it is a day of wrath, burning, desolation, weeping, mourning and lamentation, and that as a whirlwind these things shall come upon the inhabitants of all the earth.

***Where shall these great and severe judgments begin? Upon what people does the Lord intend to commence this great work of vengeance? Upon the people who profess to know his name and still blaspheme it in the midst of his house. They are the ones designated for some of the most terrible judgments of the latter days. This should be a warning to the Latter-day Saints;*** and not only those who are parents, but those who are children should diligently consider whether they are numbered among those who are mentioned in the 10th paragraph, which I have read. Upon my house, saith the Lord, shall it begin, first upon those among you who have professed my name and have not known me and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 15, Discourse 41, p. 329)

**Elder Ezra Taft Benson**

Sometimes we hear someone refer to a division in the Church. In reality, the Church is not divided. It simply means that there are some who, for the time being at least, are members of the Church but not in harmony with it. These people have a temporary membership and influence in the Church; but unless they repent, they will be missing when the final membership records are recorded.

It is well that our people understand this principle, so they will not be misled by those apostates within the Church who have not yet repented or been cut off. But there is a cleansing coming. ***The Lord says that his vengeance shall be poured out "upon the inhabitants of the earth … And upon my house shall it begin, and from my house shall it go forth, saith the Lord; First among those among you, saith the Lord, who have professed to know my name and have not known me." I look forward to that cleansing; its need within the Church is becoming increasingly apparent.***

("To the Humble Followers of Christ," *Conference Report,* April 1969)

**2 Nephi 27**

**25** Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men—

**26** Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.

**27** And wo unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord! And their works are in the dark; and they say: Who seeth us, and who knoweth us? And they also say: ***Surely, your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay.*** But behold, I will show unto them, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I know all their works. For shall the work say of him that made it, he made me not? Or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, he had no understanding?

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

HOW ZION MAY ESCAPE THE LORD'S SCOURGE.

Nevertheless, Zion shall escape if she observe to do all things whatsoever I have commanded her. But if she observe not to do whatsoever I have commanded her, I will visit her according to all her works, with sore affliction, with pestilence, with plague, with sword, with vengeance, with devouring fire. Nevertheless, let it be read this once to her ears, that I, the Lord, have accepted of her offering; and if she sin no more none of these things shall come upon her."

This way of escape, insuring the protection of the Lord, is a very simple one. Unfortunately, ***many of the people of Zion have refused to take advantage of this promise.*** As I observe conditions among the people I cannot see how we are going to escape when the judgments are to pass over the nations, which are promised in this revelation and in others which I cannot take time to read. ***Because of our disobedience and our failure to keep the commandments of the Lord, the righteous, as in times past, may be called upon to suffer with the unrighteous among us.***

(*Doctrines of Salvation,* p. 476)

**D&C 103:20. Zion Was Not to Be Redeemed in 1834**

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** explained the implications of the phrase in time: "It appears from this declaration that the redemption of Zion was not to come immediately, but was to be postponed to some future day. Moreover, that day would not come until the members of the Church were willing to ***keep their covenants and walk unitedly,*** for until the members of the Church learn ***to walk in full accord and in obedience with all of the commandments,*** this day cannot come. It may be necessary in order to bring this to pass for the Lord to use drastic measures and ***cleanse the Church from everything that offends. This he has promised to do when he is ready to redeem Zion.*** (See Matt. 13:41.)" (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 1:484.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 251)

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

Is it any wonder that we both rejoice and tremble at what lies ahead? Truly the world is and will be in commotion, but the Zion of God will be unmoved. ***The wicked and ungodly shall be swept from the Church,*** and the little stone will continue to grow until it fills the whole earth. The way ahead is dark and dreary and dreadful. There will yet be martyrs; the doors in Carthage shall again enclose the innocent. We have not been promised that the trials and evils of the world will entirely pass us by. If we as a people, keep the commandments of God; if we take the side of the Church ***on all issues, both religious and political;*** if we take the Holy Spirit for our guide; if we give heed to the words of the apostles and prophets who minister among us—***then,*** from an eternal standpoint, all things will work together for our good. Our view of the future shall be undimmed, and, whether in life or in death, we shall see our blessed Lord return to reign on earth. We shall see the New Jerusalem coming down from God in heaven ***to join with the Holy City we have built.*** We shall mingle with those of Enoch's city while together we worship and serve the Lord forever."

("The Coming Tests and Trials and Glory," General Conf., April 1980)

**Elder Ezra Taft Benson**

But there are some today who complain that the home evening manual should have been issued years ago. If this is true then the Lord will hold his servants accountable, but no one can say that from the inception of the Church up to the present day the Lord through his Spirit to the individual members and through his spokesmen the prophets, has not given us the objectives and plenty of guidelines and counsel. The fact that some of us have not done much about it even when it is spelled out in detail is not the Lord's fault.

For years we have been counseled to have on hand a year's supply of food. Yet there are some today who will not start storing until the Church comes out with a detailed monthly home storage program. Now suppose that never happens. We still cannot say we have not been told.

***Should the Lord decide at this time to cleanse the Church—and the need for that cleansing seems to be increasing***—a famine in this land of one year's duration could wipe out a large percentage of slothful members, including some ward and stake officers. Yet we cannot say we have not been warned."

("Not Commanded in All Things," *Conference Report,* April 1965)

**Elder Ezra Taft Benson**

Now Satan is anxious to neutralize the inspired counsel of the Prophet and hence keep the priesthood off-balance, ineffective and inert in the fight for freedom. He does this through diverse means including the use of perverse reasoning... Sometimes from behind the pulpit, in our classrooms, in our Council meetings and in our church publications we hear, read or witness things that do not square with the truth... Now do not let this serve as an excuse for your own wrong-doing. ***The Lord is letting the wheat and the tares mature before he fully purges the Church. He is also testing you to see if you will be misled.*** The devil is trying to deceive the very elect. As members of the Church we have some close quarters to pass through if we are to save our souls. As the Church gets larger some men have increasing responsibility and more and more duties must be delegated. We all have stewardships for which we must account to the Lord. Unfortunately some men who do not honor their stewardships may have an adverse affect on many people. ***Often the greater the man's responsibility the more good or evil he can accomplish. The Lord usually gives a man a long enough rope and sufficient time to determine whether that man wants to pull himself into the presence of God or drop off somewhere below.*** There are some regrettable things being said and done by some people in the Church today. As President Clark so well warned, "The ravening wolves are amongst us, from our own membership and they, more than any others, are clothed in sheep's clothing because they wear the habiliments of the priesthood.... We should be careful of them."

("Our Immediate Responsibility," BYU Devotional, October 25 1966)

**Doctrine and Covenants 38**

**12** Which causeth silence to reign, and all eternity is pained, ***and the angels are waiting the great command to reap down the earth, to gather the tares that they may be burned;*** and, behold, the enemy is combined.

## Sons of Perdition: More Than You Know

Once again, as tiring as it may become to keep saying this, we have to stick with the Pyramid of Truth to establish doctrine... Something randomly posted on the church's website does not appear on the Pyramid of Truth. A single quote from an Apostle or Prophet is also nothing if it is not sourced higher in the Pyramid of Truth or sustained as doctrine by common consent. With that said, as we tackle this sensitive and extremely important topic, we much get as high on the Pyramid of Truth as possible—meaning, words of Christ, Joseph Smith, and the Standard Works. These are what we must build our foundation of doctrine upon—everything else is sand.

**3 Nephi 29**

**4** And when ye shall see these sayings coming forth among you, then ye need not any longer spurn at the doings of the Lord, ***for the sword of his justice is in his right hand; and behold, at that day, if ye shall spurn at his doings he will cause that it shall soon overtake you.***

**5** Wo unto him that spurneth at the doings of the Lord; ***yea, wo unto him that shall deny the Christ and his works!***

**6** Yea, wo unto him that shall deny the revelations of the Lord, and that shall say the Lord no longer worketh by revelation, or by prophecy, or by gifts, or by tongues, or by healings, or by the power of the Holy Ghost!

**7** ***Yea, and wo unto him that shall say at that day, to get gain, that there can be no miracle wrought by Jesus Christ; for he that doeth this shall become like unto the son of perdition, for whom there was no mercy, according to the word of Christ!***

**8** Yea, and ye need not any longer hiss, nor spurn, nor make game of the Jews, nor any of the remnant of the house of Israel; for behold, the Lord remembereth his covenant unto them, and he will do unto them according to that which he hath sworn.

**9** Therefore ye need not suppose that ye can turn the right hand of the Lord unto the left, that he may not execute judgment unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he hath made unto the house of Israel.

**Moroni 7**

**37** Behold I say unto you, Nay; for it is by faith that miracles are wrought; and it is by faith that angels appear and minister unto men; wherefore, if these things have ceased wo be unto the children of men, for it is because of unbelief, and all is vain.

**38** For no man can be saved, according to the words of Christ, save they shall have faith in his name; wherefore, if these things have ceased, then has faith ceased also; and awful is the state of man, ***for they are as though there had been no redemption made.***

Read this over and over again until you understand what it is saying... These people will become Sons of Perdition. Period. And what are they guilty of? These are members of The Church of Jesus Christ that preach for gain and who preach against the Lord "remember[ing] his covenant unto them," who preach against the Lord doing "according to that which he hath sworn" (3 Ne. 29:8). Such will become Sons of Perdition, and it will be "as though there had been no redemption made" (Moro. 7:38) for them... Period.

**Matthew 18:5–10. A Warning Not to Offend Little Ones**

Though Jesus was speaking to leaders of His day when He issued a stern warning not to offend little ones, the message recorded in Matthew 18:5–10 applies to all of us (see D&C 50:40–41 for a broader definition of "little children"). We must not cause anyone seeking greater understanding of the gospel plan to stumble in their faith, nor should we do anything to block their progress toward eternal life. **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** taught about this warning:

"Few crimes are as gross and wicked as that of teaching false doctrine and leading souls away from God and salvation. ... If eternal joy is the reward given those who teach the truth and bring souls to salvation, shall not those who teach false doctrines and lead souls to damnation receive as their reward eternal remorse? (D. & C. 18:10–16.)

"... It is better to die and be denied the blessings of continued mortal existence than to live and lead souls from the truth, thereby gaining eternal damnation for oneself" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 1:420).

(*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), Chapter 6: Matthew 16–18)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Do Not Betray the Brethren

O ye Twelve! and all Saints! profit by this important Key—that in all your trials, troubles, temptations, afflictions, bonds, imprisonments and death, see to it, that you do not betray heaven; that you do not betray Jesus Christ; that you do not betray the brethren; that you do not betray the revelations of God, whether in Bible, Book of Mormon, or Doctrine and Covenants, or any other that ever was or ever will be given and revealed unto man in this world or that which is to come. Yea, in all your kicking and flounderings, see to it that you do not this thing, ***lest***

***innocent blood be found upon your skirts, and you go down to hell. All other sins are not to be compared to sinning against the Holy Ghost, and proving a traitor to the brethren.***

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 156)

**Doctrine and Covenants 132**

**27** The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, which shall not be forgiven in the world nor out of the world, ***is in that ye commit murder wherein ye shed innocent blood, and assent unto my death, after ye have received my new and everlasting covenant,*** saith the Lord God; and he that abideth not this law can in nowise enter into my glory, but shall be damned, saith the Lord.

**Alma 36**

**14** Yea, and ***I had murdered many of his children, or rather led them away unto destruction;*** yea, and in fine so great had been my iniquities, that the very thought of coming into the presence of my God did rack my soul with inexpressible horror.

**Alma 39**

**3** And this is not all, my son. Thou didst do that which was grievous unto me; for thou didst forsake the ministry, and did go over into the land of Siron among the borders of the Lamanites, after the harlot Isabel.

**4** Yea, she did steal away the hearts of many; but this was no excuse for thee, my son. Thou shouldst have tended to the ministry wherewith thou wast entrusted.

**5** Know ye not, my son, ***that these things are an abomination in the sight of the Lord; yea, most abominable above all sins save it be the shedding of innocent blood or denying the Holy Ghost?***

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

All sins shall be forgiven, except the sin against the Holy Ghost; for Jesus will save all except the sons of perdition. What must a man do to commit the unpardonable sin? ***He must receive the Holy Ghost, have the heavens opened unto him, and know God, and then sin against Him. After a man has sinned against the Holy Ghost, there is no repentance for him.*** … and from that time he begins to be an enemy. ***This is the case with many apostates of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.***

When a man begins to be an enemy to this work, he hunts me, he seeks to kill me, and never ceases to thirst for my blood. He gets the spirit of the devil—the same spirit that they had who crucified the Lord of Life—the same spirit that sins against the Holy Ghost. ***You cannot save such persons; you cannot bring them to repentance; they make open war, like the devil, and awful is the consequence.***

***I advise all of you to be careful what you do, or you may by-and-by find out that you have been deceived. Stay yourselves; do not give way; don't make any hasty moves, you may be saved.***

The best men bring forth the best works. ***The man who tells you words of life is the man who can save you. I warn you against all evil characters who sin against the Holy Ghost; for there is no redemption for them in this world nor in the world to come.***

("The Forgiveness of Sins," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 358)

**3 Nephi 10**

**11** ***And thus far were the scriptures fulfilled which had been spoken by the prophets.***

**12** And it was the more righteous part of the people who were saved, ***and it was they who received the prophets and stoned them not; and it was they who had not shed the blood of the saints, who were spared***—

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

I think I am safe in saying that no man can become a Son of Perdition until he has known the light. Those who have never received the light are not to become Sons of Perdition. They will be punished if they rebel against God. They will have to pay the price of their sinning, but it is only those who have the light through the priesthood and through the power of God and through their membership in the Church who will be banished forever from his influence ***into outer darkness*** to dwell with the devil and his angels. That is a punishment that will not come to those who have never known the truth. Bad as they may suffer, and awful as their punishment may be, they are not among that group which is to suffer the eternal death and banishment from all influence concerning the power of God.

(*Seek Ye Earnestly… Gospel Discourses of Joseph Fielding Smith*)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Our Heavenly Father is more liberal in his views, and boundless in his mercies and blessings, than we are ready to believe or receive, ***and, at the same time, is more terrible to the workers of iniquity, more awful in the executions of his punishments, and more ready to detect every false way than we are apt to suppose him to be;***

(*History,* 1838–1856, volume D–1 [1 August 1842–1 July 1843])

**Hebrews 6 (JST)**

**4** For he hath made it impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

**5** And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

**6** If they shall fall away, to be renewed again unto repentance; seeing they crucify unto themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

There is superior intelligence bestowed upon such as obey the Gospel with full purpose of heart, which, if sinned against, the apostate is left naked and destitute of the Spirit of God, and he is, in truth, nigh unto cursing, and his end to be burned. When once that light which was in them is taken from them they become as much darkened as they were previously enlightened, and then, no marvel, if all their power should be enlisted against the truth, and they Judas-like, seek the destruction of those who were their greatest benefactors.

(*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* [2007], 321)

**(9-8) What Is the Difference Between Rejecting Jesus and Denying the Holy Ghost?**

[**President Joseph Fielding Smith**:] "A man who has not received the gift of the Holy Ghost and therefore who has never 'tasted of the heavenly gift,' may be guilty of blasphemy against Jesus Christ and be forgiven on his repentance, but so great is the testimony through the gift of the Holy Ghost, should he turn against the Lord and fight his work, there is no forgiveness. The shedding of innocent blood is not confined to taking lives of the innocent, but is also included in seeking to destroy the word of God, and putting Christ to open shame. Those who have known the truth and then fight against the authorized servants of Jesus Christ also fight against him, for they who fight against his servants also do it unto him, and thus are guilty of his blood." (Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions,* 1:63–64.)

(*The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ and His Apostles,* p. 68)

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

Apostates exhibit varying degrees of indifference and of rebellion, and their punishment, in time and in eternity, is based on the type and de-

gree of apostasy which is involved. Those who become indifferent to the Church, who simply drift from the course of righteousness to the way of the world, ***are not in the same category with traitors who fight the truth, and with those whose open rebellion destines them to eternal damnation as sons of perdition.***

(*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* Vol. 3)

**President Brigham Young**

If a person with an honest heart, a broken, contrite, and pure spirit, in all fervency and honesty of soul, presents himself and says that he wishes to be baptized for the remission of his sins, and the ordinance is administered by one having authority, is that man saved? Yes, to that period of time. Should the Lord see proper to take him then from the earth, the man has believed and been baptized, and is a fit subject for heaven—a candidate for the kingdom of God in the celestial world, because he has repented and done all that was required of him to that hour. But, after he is baptized and hands have been laid upon him for the reception of the Holy Ghost, suppose that on the next day he is commanded to go forth and preach the Gospel, or to teach his family, or to assist in building up the kingdom of God, or to take all his substance and give it for the sustenance of the poor, and he says, "I will not do it," his baptism and confirmation would depart from him, and ***he would be left as a son of perdition.*** But if he says, with a willing heart and mind, "Here is my substance; I will not only pay the tenth of it, but the whole of it is at your feet; do with it as you please," does he not continue to be saved? Yes."

("Light of the Spirit, etc.," *Journal of Discourses,* Vol. 8, Discourse 30)

**President Joseph F. Smith**

The unpardonable sin is to willfully deny and defy the Holy Ghost after having received His witness.

No man can sin against light until he has it; nor against the Holy Ghost, until after he has received it by the gift of God through the appointed channel or way. To sin against the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter, the Witness of the Father and the Son, wilfully denying him and defying him, after having received him, constitutes [the unpardonable sin].16

No man can possibly commit the unpardonable sin in ignorance. A man must be brought to a knowledge of Christ; he must receive a testimony of Christ in his heart, and possess light and power, knowledge and understanding, before he is capable of committing that sin. But when a man turns away from the truth, violates the knowledge that he has received, tramples it under his feet, puts Christ again to open shame, denies His atonement, denies the power of the resurrection, denies the miracles that He has wrought for the salvation of the human family, and says in his heart, "It is not true," and abides in that denial of the truth, after having received the testimony of the Spirit, he commits the unpardonable sin.17

[Following the Savior's Crucifixion,] why were [the Apostles] forgetful and seemingly ignorant of all they had been taught by the Savior respecting the objects of his mission to the earth? Because they lacked one important qualification, they had not yet been "endowed with power from on high." [See Luke 24:49.] They had not yet obtained the ***gift of the Holy Ghost.*** ...

***If the disciples had been endowed with the "gift of the Holy Ghost," or "with power from on high," at this time, their course would have been altogether different ... , as the sequel abundantly proved. If Peter, who was the chief apostle, had received the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the power and testimony thereof prior to the terrible night on which he cursed and swore and denied his Lord [see Matthew 26:69–75], the result would have been very different with him, for then he would have sinned against "light and knowledge," and "against the Holy Ghost," for which there is no forgiveness.*** The fact, therefore, that he was forgiven, after bitter tears of repentance, is an evidence that he was without the witness of the Holy Ghost, never having received it. The other disciples or apostles of Christ were precisely in the same condition, and it was not until the evening of the day on which Jesus came out of the grave that he bestowed upon them this inestimable gift [see John 20:22].

If any people on earth are capable of committing the unpardonable sin, you will find them among those who have, or will, come to a knowledge of the truth. ... You and I have received the light. We have received the Holy Priesthood. We have received the testimony of the Holy Spirit, and have been brought from death unto life. Therefore, we are now on very safe or on dangerous ground,—dangerous if we are trifling with these sacred things that have been committed to our care. Hence I warn you, my brethren and sisters, especially my brethren, against trifling with your [priesthood]. ... If you do, as God lives He will withdraw His Spirit from you, and the time will come when you will be found kicking against the light and knowledge which you have received, ***and you may become sons of perdition.*** Therefore, you had better beware lest the second death shall be passed upon you.

(*Teachings of the Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith,* Chapter 8)

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

Evidently many among us have made a dreadful mistake, but not unpardonable, in thinking that the sons of perdition will be very few. We have heard it said at times that they will be so few that they probably could be "counted on the fingers of one hand." Where this thought originated we may not know. From the reading of the scriptures it appears that there will be a large number; far too many even if there were but one, for their punishment is most severe without any question.

All those who are permanently subject to the second death are those who have had the testimony of the Holy Ghost and who have known the truth and then have rejected it and put Christ to open shame. Of these we read:

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

(*Answers to Gospel Questions,* Vol. 1)

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

In my thinking there will be a large number, exceedingly large, that will become sons of perdition.

(*Answers to Gospel Questions* #5, "What Is the Meaning of 2nd Death?")

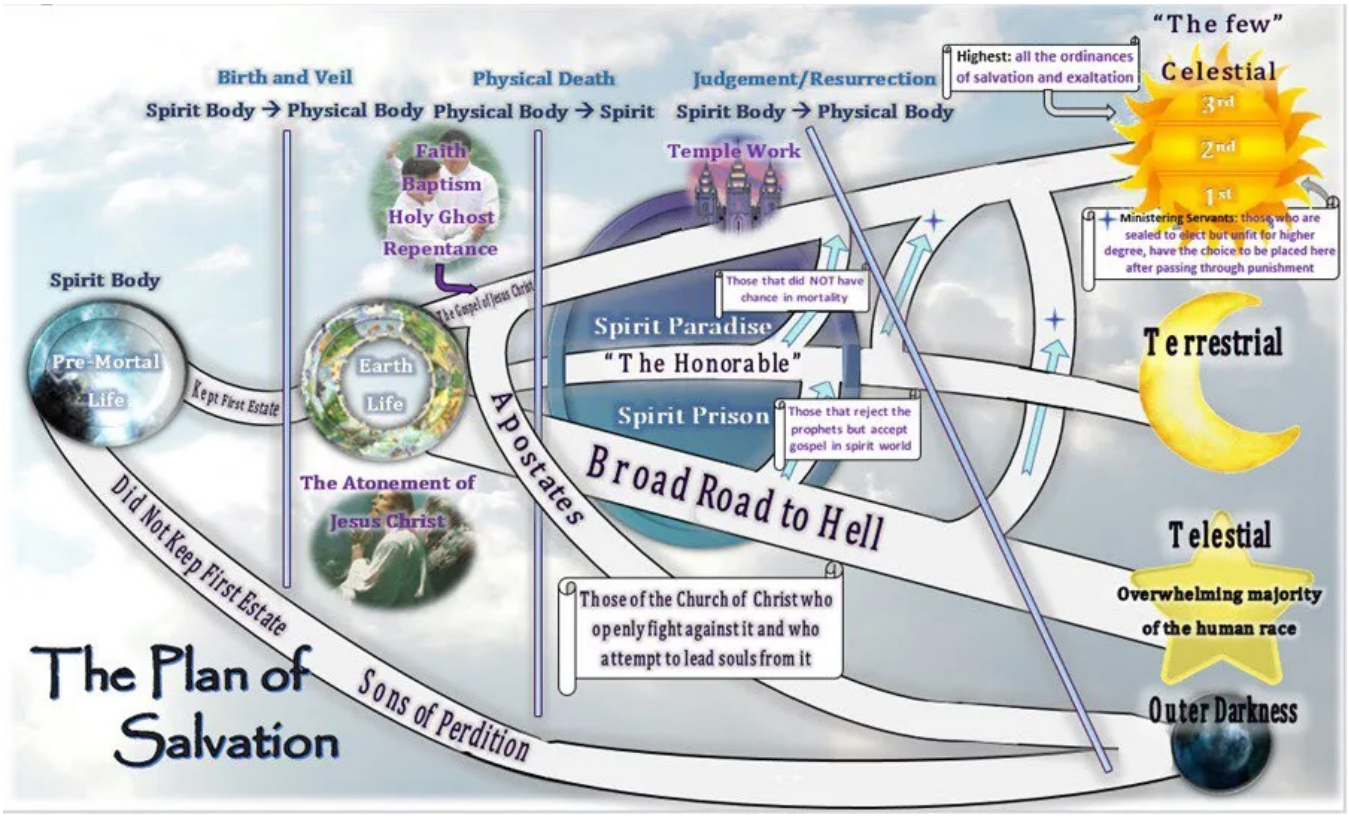
**President Harold B. Lee**

I bear you my testimony that I know the Savior lives, ***that the most powerful witness you can have that He lives comes when the power of the Holy Spirit bears witness to your soul that He does live. More powerful than sight, more powerful than walking and talking with Him, is that witness of the Spirit by which you shall be judged if you were to turn against Him.***

(Address given at Lausanne Switzerland conference, 26 Sept. 1972, Historical Department Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 8.)

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

Those in this life who gain a perfect knowledge of the divinity of the gospel cause, a knowledge that comes only by revelation from the Holy Ghost, and who then link themselves with Lucifer and come out in open rebellion, also become sons of perdition. Their destiny, following


"The few"
Celestial
3rd
2nd
1st
Highest: all the ordinances of salvation and exaltation
Ministering Servants: those who are sealed to elect but unfit for higher degree, have the choice to be placed here after passing through punishment
Birth and Veil
Spirit Body → Physical Body
Physical Death
Physical Body → Spirit
Judgement/Resurrection
Spirit Body → Physical Body
Faith
Baptism
Holy Ghost
Repentance
Temple Work
Spirit Body
Pre-Mortal Life
Kept First Estate
Earth Life
The Gospel of Jesus Christ
Those that did NOT have chance in mortality
Spirit Paradise
"The Honorable"
Spirit Prison
Those that reject the prophets but accept gospel in spirit world
Terrestrial
Apostates
Broad Road to Hell
The Atonement of Jesus Christ
Did Not Keep First Estate
Those of the Church of Christ who openly fight against it and who attempt to lead souls from it
Telestial
Overwhelming majority of the human race
The Plan of Salvation
Sons of Perdition
Outer Darkness

their resurrection, is to be cast out with the devil and his angels, to inherit the same kingdom in a state where "their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (D&C 76:32–49; D&C 29:27–30; Hebrews 6:4–8; 2 Peter 2:20–22; 2 Nephi 9:14–16; *Doctrines of Salvation,* vol. 1, pp. 47–49; vol. 2, pp. 218–225.)

(*Mormon Doctrine,* 2nd ed., p. 746)

This used to be such common knowledge in the church, and taught amongst the Saints, that visuals for the youth looked like the image above.

## The Prodigal Son: Suffer to Serve

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

I feel thankful that there have no more denied the faith; I pray God in the name of Jesus that you all may be kept in the faith unto the end: ***let your sufferings be what they may, it is better in the eyes of God that you should die, than that you should give up the land of Zion, the inheritances which you have purchased with your moneys; for every man that giveth not up his inheritance, though he should die, yet, when the Lord shall come, he shall stand upon it, and with Job, in his flesh he shall see God. Therefore, this is my counsel, that you retain your lands, even unto the uttermost, and employ every lawful means to seek redress of your enemies; and pray to God, day and night, to return you in peace and in safety to the lands of your inheritance:*** and when the judge fail you, appeal unto the executive; and when the executive fail you, appeal unto the president; and when the president fail you, and all laws fail you, and the humanity of the people fail you, and all things else fail you but God alone, and you continue to weary Him with your importunings, as the poor woman did the unjust judge, He will not fail to execute judgment upon your enemies, and to avenge His own elect that cry unto Him day and night.

Behold, He will not fail you! He will come with ten thousand of His Saints, and all His adversaries shall be destroyed with the breath of His lips! ***All those who keep their inheritances, notwithstanding they should be beaten and driven, shall be likened unto the wise virgins who took oil in their lamps. But all those who are unbelieving and fearful, will be likened unto the foolish virgins, who took no oil in their lamps: and when they shall return and say unto the Saints, Give us of your lands—behold, there will be no room found for them.*** As respects giving deeds, I would advise you to give deeds as far as the brethren have legal and just claims for them, and then let every man answer to God for the disposal of them.

("The Value of an Inheritance," *TPJS,* pp. 35–36)

**Luke 15**

**11** ¶ And he said, A certain man had two sons:

**12** And the younger of them said to his father, Father, ***give me the portion of goods which falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.***

**13** And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, ***and there wasted his substance with riotous living.***

**14** And when he had spent all, ***there arose a mighty famine in that land;*** and he began to be in want.

**15** And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

**16** And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks which the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him.

**17** And when he came to himself, he said, How many ***hired servants of my father's*** have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

**18** I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

**19** And am no more worthy to be called thy son: ***make me as one of thy hired servants.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**47** And while they were yet laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves: And what need hath my lord of this tower?

**48** And consulted for a long time, saying among themselves: What need hath my lord of this tower, seeing this is a time of peace?

**49** ***Might not this money be given to the exchangers? For there is no need of these things.***

**50** And while they were at variance one with another ***they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord.***

**51** And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive trees.

**Ether 13**

**6** And that a New Jerusalem should be built up upon this land, unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph, for which things there has been a type.

**7** ***For as Joseph brought his father down into the land of Egypt, even so he died there; wherefore, the Lord brought a remnant of the seed of Joseph out of the land of Jerusalem, that he might be merciful unto the seed of Joseph that they should perish not, even as he was merciful unto the father of Joseph that he should perish not.***

**8** Wherefore, the remnant of the house of Joseph shall be built upon this land; and it shall be a land of their inheritance; and they shall build up a holy city unto the Lord, like unto the Jerusalem of old; and they shall no more be confounded, until the end come when the earth shall pass away.

**President James E. Faust**

In the Doctrine and Covenants we are told:

"The dead who repent will be redeemed, through obedience to the ordinances of the house of God,

***"And after they have paid the penalty of their transgressions, and are washed clean, shall receive a reward according to their works,*** for they are heirs of salvation."

We remember that ***the prodigal son wasted his inheritance,*** and when it was all gone he came back to his father's house. There he was welcomed back into the family, ***but his inheritance was spent. Mercy will not rob justice,*** and the sealing power of faithful parents will only claim wayward children upon the condition of their repentance and Christ's Atonement. ***Repentant wayward children will enjoy salvation and all the blessings that go with it, but exaltation is much more. It must be fully earned.***

("Dear Are the Sheep That Have Wandered," General Conf., Apr. 2003)

**Elder Boyd K. Packer**

We cannot overemphasize the value of temple marriage, the binding ties of the sealing ordinance, and the standards of worthiness required of them. When parents keep the covenants they have made at the altar of the temple, ***their children will be forever bound to them.***

("Our Moral Environment," *Ensign,* May 1992, 68)

**Hebrews 11**

**35** Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

**D&C 76:81–85. Those Who Inherit the Telestial Glory Will Pass through Hell**

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** explained:

"That part of the spirit world inhabited by wicked spirits who are awaiting the eventual day of their resurrection is called hell. Between their death and resurrection, these souls of the wicked are cast out into outer darkness, into the gloomy depression of sheol, into the hades of waiting wicked spirits, into hell. There they suffer the torments of the damned; there they welter in the vengeance of eternal fire; there is found weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth; there the fiery indignation of the wrath of God is poured out upon the wicked. (Alma 40:11–14; D. & C. 76:103–106.)

"Hell will have an end. Viewing future events, John saw that 'death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.' (Rev. 20:13.) Jacob taught that this escape from death and hell meant the bringing of the body out of the grave and the spirit out of hell. 'And this death of which I have spoken, which is the spiritual death,' he said, 'shall deliver up its dead; which spiritual death is hell; wherefore, death and hell must deliver up their dead, and hell must deliver up its captive spirits, and the grave must deliver up its captive bodies, and the bodies and the spirits of men will be restored one to the other.' (2 Ne. 9:10–12.) It was in keeping with this principle for David to receive the promise: 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell.' (Psalms 16:10; Acts 2:27.)

"After their resurrection, the great majority of those who have suffered in hell will pass into the telestial kingdom; the balance, cursed as sons of perdition, will be consigned to partake of endless wo with the devil and his angels. ...

"Who will go to hell? This query is abundantly answered in the scriptures. Since those going to a telestial kingdom travel to their destination through the depths of hell and as a result of obedience to telestial law, it follows that all those who live a telestial law will go to hell." (*Mormon Doctrine,* pp. 349–50.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 165)

**Doctrine and Covenants 132**

**15** Therefore, if a man marry him a wife in the world, and he marry her not by me nor by my word, and he covenant with her so long as he is in the world and she with him, their covenant and marriage are not of force when they are dead, and when they are out of the world; therefore, they are not bound by any law when they are out of the world.

**16** Therefore, when they are out of the world they neither marry nor are given in marriage; ***but are appointed angels in heaven, which angels are ministering servants, to minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory.***

**17** For these angels did not abide my law; therefore, they cannot be enlarged, but remain separately and singly, ***without exaltation, in their saved condition,*** to all eternity; and from henceforth are not gods, but are angels of God forever and ever.

**21** Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye abide my law ye cannot attain to this glory.

**22** ***For strait is the gate, and narrow the way that leadeth unto the exaltation and continuation of the lives, and few there be that find it, because ye receive me not in the world neither do ye know me.***

**23** But ***if ye receive me in the world, then shall ye know me, and shall receive your exaltation;*** that where I am ye shall be also.

**24** This is eternal lives—to know the only wise and true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. I am he. Receive ye, therefore, my law.

**25** Broad is the gate, and wide the way that leadeth to the deaths; and many there are that go in thereat, because they receive me not, neither do they abide in my law.

**Doctrine and Covenants 137**

**7** Thus came the voice of the Lord unto me, saying: All who have died ***without a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry,*** shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God;

**8** Also all that shall die henceforth ***without a knowledge of it, who would have received it with all their hearts,*** shall be heirs of that kingdom;

**9** For I, the Lord, will judge all men according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts.

**D&C 137:7–9. On What Basis Will All Mankind Be Judged?**

The true desire of our heart determines our future. ***If we have had the opportunity to hear the gospel, our obedience to it demonstrates our true desire.*** If not, our desire will determine whether we accept it when we are given the opportunity, either in this life or the spirit world. ***All whose hearts are right will receive and live the gospel whenever they have the opportunity*** and will be "heirs of the celestial kingdom of God" (D&C 137:7). ***Vicarious ordinance work is performed in the temple for those like Alvin Smith who did not have the opportunity to receive the ordinances of the gospel in mortality.*** Heavenly Father provides the way for all His children to receive salvation (see Alma 41:3–15).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 355)

## Plead, Render Unto Ceasar, Blood

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**78** That every man may act in doctrine and principle pertaining to futurity, according to the moral agency which I have given unto him, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment.

**79** Therefore, it is not right that any man should be in bondage one to another.

**80** And for this purpose have I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose, ***and redeemed the land by the shedding of blood.***

**81** Now, unto what shall I liken the children of Zion? I will liken them unto the parable of the woman and the unjust judge, for men ought always to pray and not to faint, which saith—

**82** There was in a city a judge which feared not God, neither regarded man.

**83** And there was a widow in that city, and she came unto him, saying: Avenge me of mine adversary.

**84** And he would not for a while, but afterward he said within himself: Though I fear not God, nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

**85** Thus will I liken the children of Zion.

**86** Let them importune at the feet of the judge;

**87** And if he heed them not, let them importune at the feet of the governor;

**88** And if the governor heed them not, let them importune at the feet of the president;

**89** And if the president heed them not, then will the Lord arise and come forth out of his hiding place, and in his fury vex the nation;

**90** And in his hot displeasure, and in his fierce anger, in his time, will cut off those wicked, unfaithful, and unjust stewards, and appoint them their portion among hypocrites, and unbelievers;

**91** ***Even in outer darkness, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.***

**92** Pray ye, therefore, that their ears may be opened unto your cries, that I may be merciful unto them, that these things may not come upon them.

**93** What I have said unto you must needs be, that all men may be left without excuse;

**94** That wise men and rulers may hear and know that which they have never considered;

**95** That I may proceed to bring to pass my act, my strange act, and perform my work, my strange work, that men may discern between the righteous and the wicked, saith your God.

**D&C 101:81–95. Why Was It So Important for the Saints to Appeal for Redress?**

The Lord repeated the parable in Luke 18:1–8 of the woman who so wearied a judge with her importuning that he finally granted her petition. He then likened the parable to the situation of the Saints. They were to seek redress from the judge through the governor to the president of the United States himself. If the appeals went unheeded, the Lord said that he would rise in anger and mete out justice to those who had dispossessed the Saints, for all men would "be left without excuse" (D&C 101:93).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 245)

**Hebrews 11**

**6** But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

**Luke 18**

**1** And he spake a parable unto them, saying that men ought always to pray and not faint,

**2** Saying, There was in a city a judge, who feared not God nor regarded man.

**3** And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

**4** And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

**5** Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

**6** And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

**7** And shall not God avenge his own elect, who cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with men?

**8** I tell you that he will come; and when he does come, he will avenge his saints speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**55** And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;

**56** And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard; for it is mine; ***I have bought it with money.***

**57** Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; ***break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen.***

**58** ***And inasmuch as they gather together against you, avenge me of mine enemies,*** that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land.

**Doctrine and Covenants 58**

**51** And an epistle and subscription, to be presented unto all the churches to obtain moneys, to be put into the hands of the bishop, of himself or the agent, as seemeth him good or as he shall direct, to purchase lands for an inheritance for the children of God.

**52** For, behold, verily I say unto you, the Lord willeth that the disciples and the children of men should open their hearts, even to purchase this whole region of country, as soon as time will permit.

**53** Behold, here is wisdom. Let them do this lest they receive none inheritance, ***save it be by the shedding of blood.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 63**

**25** Behold, the land of Zion—I, the Lord, hold it in mine own hands;

**26** Nevertheless, I, the Lord, render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's.

**27** Wherefore, I the Lord will that you should purchase the lands, that you may have advantage of the world, that you may have claim on the world, that they may not be stirred up unto anger.

**28** For Satan putteth it into their hearts to anger against you, and to the shedding of blood.

**29** Wherefore, the land of Zion shall not be obtained but by purchase or by blood, otherwise there is none inheritance for you.

**30** And if by purchase, behold you are blessed;

**31** And if by blood, as you are forbidden to shed blood, lo, your enemies are upon you, and ye shall be scourged from city to city, and from synagogue to synagogue, ***and but few shall stand to receive an inheritance.***

**32** I, the Lord, am angry with the wicked; I am holding my Spirit from the inhabitants of the earth.

**33** I have sworn in my wrath, and decreed wars upon the face of the earth, and the wicked shall slay the wicked, and fear shall come upon every man;

**34** ***And the saints also shall hardly escape; nevertheless, I, the Lord, am with them, and will come down in heaven from the presence of my Father and consume the wicked with unquenchable fire.***

**35** ***And behold, this is not yet, but by and by.***

**36** Wherefore, seeing that I, the Lord, have decreed all these things upon the face of the earth, I will that my saints should be assembled upon the land of Zion;

**37** And that every man should take righteousness in his hands and faithfulness upon his loins, and lift a warning voice unto the inhabitants of the earth; and declare both by word ***and by flight*** that desolation shall come upon the wicked.

### (24-4) Jeremiah 21; 22:1–9. Will the Lord Do What He Has Said?

King Zedekiah sent Pashur to inquire of the Lord through Jeremiah concerning Jerusalem. Jeremiah's response had three parts: (1) The answer to the king's hope that the Lord would intervene to save Jerusalem from the Chaldeans (see Jeremiah 21:4–7) was clear: there was no hope. (2) Counsel on how the people and the royal family could preserve their lives by surrendering to the Chaldeans rather than fighting them (see vv. 8–10). (3) A prophecy concerning the house of David (see 21:11–14; 22:1–9), to which Jeremiah gave an alternative: If the king and his people would turn back to righteousness, the throne of David would be preserved (see Jeremiah 22:4), but if not, it would "become a desolation" (v. 5).

Gilead symbolized the richest soil Israel knew, and Lebanon the highest mountain and the finest trees (see v. 6). But the Lord sent His destroyers, and the finest lands were desolated. The reason is given in verse 9.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (3rd ed., 2003), p. 246)

### (24-7) Jeremiah 24. What Is the Meaning of the Parable of the Figs?

It was the Lord's will that Judah submit to Babylonia, take their punishment, and repent. Those who did so were carried away "for their good" (Jeremiah 24:5). Zedekiah and others, however, refused to submit. Adam Clarke said:

"Under the type of *good* and *bad figs,* God represents the state of the persons who had already been carried captives into Babylon, with their king Jeconiah, compared with the state of those who should be carried away with Zedekiah. Those already carried away, being the *choice* of the people, are represented by the *good figs:* those now remaining, and soon to be carried into captivity, are represented by the *bad figs, that were good for nothing.* The *state* also of the *former* in their captivity was vastly preferable to the *state* of *those* who were now about to be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon. The *latter* would be treated as *double rebels;* the *former,* being the most respectable of the inhabitants, were treated well; and even in captivity, a marked distinction would be made between them, God ordering it so. But the prophet sufficiently explains his own meaning. …

"[The Lord says,] Those already carried away into captivity, I esteem as far more excellent than those who still remain in the land. They have not sinned so deeply, and they are now penitent; and therefore, *I will set mine eyes upon them for good,* ver. 6. I will watch over them by an especial providence, and they shall be restored to their own land." (*The Holy Bible … with a Commentary and Critical Notes,* 4:316–17; see also Enrichments G and A.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (3rd ed., 2003), p. 246)

### (24-8) Jeremiah 25:16–29. Who Will Drink the Cup of God's Fury?

Commentary on the phrase "cup of [the Lord's] fury" is found in Notes and Commentary on Isaiah 51:17–23. Beginning in Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, the bitter cup will be drunk by Egypt, the nations of the west and east, and Babylonia.

The last part of chapter 25 prophetically leaps forward into the future to the time of the battle of Armageddon. That battle is depicted here to show Judah that the wicked nations will not escape the Lord's judgment. The language of these scriptures shows that what Jeremiah saw was the time when all nations shall gather together against the Lord's people and be brought into judgment. Elder Joseph Fielding Smith specifically tied the Lord's controversy with the nations to the last days (see *The Signs of the Times,* pp. 138–75). And the language of Jeremiah 25:32–33 is similar to other scriptures about Armageddon. (See Notes and Commentary on Ezekiel 38–39; Enrichment I.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (3rd ed., 2003), p. 246)

### (24-12) Jeremiah 27. The Yoke of Bondage

Although Jeremiah 27:1 dates the prophecy about Judah's bondage to Jehoiakim's reign, verses 3 and 12 suggest that it was given during Zedekiah's reign, not Jehoiakim's.

Ambassadors from several neighboring countries had come to Zedekiah with the proposal that unitedly they could defeat Babylon. Jeremiah was instructed to take bonds and yokes and wear them to symbolize that it was the Lord's will that they submit to their would-be conquerors. The message that they not try to change the decrees of God was also given by Jeremiah. Their lands were assigned to Babylon until that country ripened in iniquity and reaped its own reward. A promise to Judah was given in verse 11 ***that submission was their only hope of retaining their lands.***

Not every message that is claimed to be from God truly is (see v. 15), nor does every messenger bring His word. Jeremiah warned Zedekiah that the prophets who were saying that Babylon would not capture Judah should try to preserve the remnant of temple treasures left from the first and second conquests of Nebuchadnezzar. Jeremiah was pointing out that his promises of captivity were realistic, whereas the promises of delivery from Babylon made by the false prophets ignored reality, since the Babylonians had already proven they could conquer Judah with impunity.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 247)

### (24-13) Jeremiah 28. Hananiah's Challenge

The intensity of the debate that raged in Jerusalem is clearly seen in Jeremiah 28. Hananiah claimed to know from God that not only would Zedekiah's people not go into captivity but that Babylonia's power (yoke) had been broken and the temple treasures and the captives would be returned within two years (see vv. 1–4).

In verse 6, Jeremiah's "Amen, the Lord do so," is sarcastic, a challenge to see whose prophecies would be fulfilled. Moses taught that one test of a true prophet is whether his words come to pass (see Deuteronomy

18:22). Jeremiah had prophesied destruction and captivity; Hananiah, return and restoration. Jeremiah's response was simply that the prophet whose words come to pass is the one chosen by the Lord (see v. 9).

To dramatize his prophecy, Hananiah broke the yokes off Jeremiah's shoulders, predicting that God would do the same to Judah's Babylonian yoke. The Lord's response was simple and powerful: the yokes of wood would become yokes of iron (see v. 13).

Hananiah's death, prophesied by Jeremiah (see vv. 15–17), should have convinced Zedekiah and the people which of these two men was the true prophet, but they were too hardened to respond.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 247)

**(24-14) Jeremiah 29. Letter to the Captives**

"As in Jerusalem, so too in Babylon the predictions of the false prophets fostered a lively hope that the domination of Nebuchadnezzar would not last long, and that the return of the exiles to their fatherland would soon come about. The spirit of discontent thus excited must have exercised an injurious influence on the fortunes of the captives, and could not fail to frustrate the aim which the chastisement inflicted by God was designed to work out, namely, the moral advancement of the people. Therefore Jeremiah makes use of an opportunity furnished by an embassy sent by King Zedekiah to Babel, to address a letter to the exiles, exhorting them to yield with submission to the lot God had assigned to them. He counsels them to prepare, by establishing their households there, for a long sojourn in Babel, and to seek the welfare of that country as the necessary condition of their own. They must not let themselves be deceived by the false prophets' idle promises of a speedy return, since God will not bring them back and fulfil His glorious promises till after seventy years have passed (vers. 4–14)." (C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament,* 8:1:408–9.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 247)

**(24-17) Jeremiah 32:36–41. Restoration and an Everlasting Covenant**

Jeremiah clearly signaled a full return of all of the Lord's people and the establishment of an eternal covenant with them. The fulfillment of this promise is yet to be fully realized in the dispensation of the fulness of times. (see 3 Nephi 20:29–46; 21.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (3rd ed., 2003), p. 248)

**Jeremiah 27**

**6** And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him.

**7** And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son until the very time of their end come; and after that, many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them.

**8** And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, ***with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand.***

**9** Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon:

**10** For they prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you far from your land; and that I should drive you out, and ye should perish.

**11** But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, those will I let still remain in their own land, saith the LORD; and they shall till it and dwell therein.

**Doctrine and Covenants 64**

**34** Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days.

**35** And the rebellious shall be cut off out of the land of Zion, and shall be sent away, and shall not inherit the land.

**36** For, verily I say that the rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim, wherefore they shall be plucked out.

**37** Behold, I, the Lord, have made my church in these last days like unto a judge sitting on a hill, or in a high place, to judge the nations.

**38** For it shall come to pass that the inhabitants of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion.

**39** And liars and hypocrites shall be proved by them, and they who are not apostles and prophets shall be known.

**40** And even the bishop, who is a judge, and his counselors, if they are not faithful in their stewardships shall be condemned, and others shall be planted in their stead.

**41** For, behold, I say unto you that Zion shall flourish, and the glory of the Lord shall be upon her;

**42** And she shall be an ensign unto the people, and there shall come unto her out of every nation under heaven.

**43** And the day shall come when the nations of the earth shall tremble because of her, and shall fear because of her terrible ones. The Lord hath spoken it. Amen.

**Doctrine and Covenants 113**

**7** Questions by Elias Higbee: What is meant by the command in Isaiah, 52d chapter, 1st verse, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion—and what people had Isaiah reference to?

**8** He had reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of priesthood to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel; and to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage; also to return to that power which she had lost.

**9** What are we to understand by Zion loosing herself from the bands of her neck; 2d verse?

**10** We are to understand that the scattered remnants are exhorted to return to the Lord from whence they have fallen; which if they do, the promise of the Lord is that he will speak to them, or give them revelation. See the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses. The bands of her neck are the curses of God upon her, or the remnants of Israel in their scattered condition among the Gentiles.

**(24-10) Jeremiah 26:14–15. "Do with Me As Seemeth Good"**

Compare Jeremiah's words in verses 14–15 with those of Abinadi in Mosiah 17:9–10. Like Abinadi's, Jeremiah's message to his enemies was: "Do what you will, my word stands. If you choose to kill me, you will shed innocent blood, but you will not do away with my words."

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 247)

**Mosiah 21**

**1** And it came to pass that Limhi and his people returned to the city of Nephi, and began to dwell in the land again in peace.

**2** And it came to pass that after many days the Lamanites began again to be stirred up in anger against the Nephites, and they began to come into the borders of the land round about.

**3** Now they durst not slay them, because of the oath which their king had made unto Limhi; but they would smite them on their cheeks, and exercise authority over them; and began to put heavy burdens upon their backs, and drive them as they would a dumb ass—

**4** Yea, all this was done that the word of the Lord might be fulfilled.

**5** And now the afflictions of the Nephites were great, and there was no way that they could deliver themselves out of their hands, for the Lamanites had surrounded them on every side.

**6** And it came to pass that the people began to murmur with the king because of their afflictions; and they began to be desirous to go against them to battle. And they did afflict the king sorely with their complaints; therefore he granted unto them that they should do according to their desires.

**7** And they gathered themselves together again, and put on their armor, and went forth against the Lamanites to drive them out of their land.

**8** And it came to pass that the Lamanites did beat them, and drove them back, and slew many of them.

**9** And now there was a great mourning and lamentation among the people of Limhi, the widow mourning for her husband, the son and the daughter mourning for their father, and the brothers for their brethren.

**10** Now there were a great many widows in the land, and they did cry mightily from day to day, for a great fear of the Lamanites had come upon them.

**11** And it came to pass that their continual cries did stir up the remainder of the people of Limhi to anger against the Lamanites; and they went again to battle, but they were driven back again, suffering much loss.

**12** Yea, they went again even the third time, and suffered in the like manner; and those that were not slain returned again to the city of Nephi.

**13** And they did humble themselves even to the dust, subjecting themselves to the yoke of bondage, submitting themselves to be smitten, and to be driven to and fro, and burdened, according to the desires of their enemies.

**14** And they did humble themselves even in the depths of humility; and they did cry mightily to God; yea, even all the day long did they cry unto their God that he would deliver them out of their afflictions.

**15** And now ***the Lord was slow to hear their cry because of their iniquities;*** nevertheless the Lord did hear their cries, and began to soften the hearts of the Lamanites that they began to ease their burdens; yet the Lord did not see fit to deliver them out of bondage.

**Mosiah 24**

**8** And now it came to pass that Amulon began to exercise authority over Alma and his brethren, and began to persecute him, and cause that his children should persecute their children.

**9** For Amulon knew Alma, that he had been one of the king's priests, and that it was he that believed the words of Abinadi and was driven out before the king, and therefore he was wroth with him; for he was subject to king Laman, yet he exercised authority over them, and put tasks upon them, and put task-masters over them.

**10** And it came to pass that so great were their afflictions that they began to cry mightily to God.

**11** And Amulon commanded them that they should stop their cries; and he put guards over them to watch them, that whosoever should be found calling upon God should be put to death.

**12** And Alma and his people did not raise their voices to the Lord their God, but did pour out their hearts to him; and he did know the thoughts of their hearts.

**13** And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord came to them in their afflictions, saying: Lift up your heads and be of good comfort, for I know of the covenant which ye have made unto me; and I will covenant with my people and deliver them out of bondage.

**14** And I will also ease the burdens which are put upon your shoulders, that even you cannot feel them upon your backs, even while you are in bondage; and this will I do that ye may stand as witnesses for me hereafter, and that ye may know of a surety that I, the Lord God, do visit my people in their afflictions.

**15** And now it came to pass that the burdens which were laid upon Alma and his brethren were made light; yea, the Lord did strengthen them that they could bear up their burdens with ease, and they did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord.

**16** And it came to pass that so great was their faith and their patience that the voice of the Lord came unto them again, saying: Be of good comfort, for on the morrow I will deliver you out of bondage.

**Elder L. Tom Perry**

The people of Alma were delivered from the hands of the Lamanites and safely made their way back to be united with the people of Zarahemla.

What was the difference between the people of Alma and the people of King Limhi? Obviously, there were several differences: the people of Alma were peaceful and more righteous; they had already been baptized and entered into a covenant with the Lord; they humbled themselves before the Lord even before their tribulations started. All these differences made it appropriate and fair that the Lord would deliver them quickly in a miraculous way from the hand which kept them in bondage. These scriptures teach us of the Lord's power of deliverance.

("The Power of Deliverance," General Conference, April 2012)

## Blood of Our Salvation and Creation

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

**39** And it shall come to pass that he that feareth me shall be looking forth for the great day of the Lord to come, even for the signs of the coming of the Son of Man.

**40** And they shall see signs and wonders, for they shall be shown forth in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath.

**41** And they shall behold ***blood,*** and fire, and vapors of smoke.

**42** And before the day of the Lord shall come, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon be turned into ***blood,*** and the stars fall from heaven.

**43** ***And the remnant shall be gathered unto this place;***

**Doctrine and Covenants 136**

**34** Thy brethren have rejected you and your testimony, even the nation that has driven you out;

**35** And now cometh the day of their calamity, even the days of sorrow, ***like a woman that is taken in travail;*** and their sorrow shall be great unless they speedily repent, yea, very speedily.

**36** ***For they killed the prophets, and them that were sent unto them; and they have shed innocent blood, which crieth from the ground against them.***

**Doctrine** and Covenants 29

**17** And it shall come to pass, because of the wickedness of the world, that I will take vengeance upon the wicked, for they will not repent; ***for the cup of mine indignation is full; for behold, my blood shall not cleanse them if they hear me not.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 19**

**16** For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent;

**17** But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I;

**18** Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, ***and to bleed at every pore,*** and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—

**John 3**

**3** Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man ***be born again,*** he cannot ***see the kingdom of God.***

**4** Nicodemus said unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?

**5** Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot ***enter into the kingdom of God.***

**6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

There are two Comforters spoken of. One is the Holy Ghost, the same as given on the day of Pentecost, and that all Saints receive after faith, repentance, and baptism. This first Comforter or Holy Ghost has no other effect than pure intelligence. It is more powerful in expanding the mind, enlightening the understanding, and storing the intellect with present knowledge, of a man who is of the literal seed of Abraham, than one that is a Gentile, though it may not have half as much visible effect upon the body; for as the Holy Ghost falls upon one of the literal seed of Abraham, it is calm and serene; and his whole soul and body are only exercised by the pure spirit of intelligence; ***while the effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile, is to purge out the old blood,***[3] ***and make him actually of the seed of Abraham.***[4] ***That man that has none of the blood of Abraham (naturally) must have a new creation by the Holy Ghost.*** In such a case, there may be more of a powerful effect upon the body, and visible to the eye, than upon an Israelite, while the Israelite at first might be far before the Gentile in pure intelligence.

**Footnotes (see below)**
3. Isa. 4:4, Heb. 9:22
4. D&C 103:17

("The Two Comforters," *TPJS,* pp.149–150)

**Isaiah 4**

**2** In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.

**3** ***And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem:***

**4** When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, ***and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.***

**5** And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence.

**6** And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.

**Hebrews 9**

**22** ***And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.***

**23** It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

**Doctrine and Covenants 103**

**7** And by hearkening to observe all the words which I, the Lord their God, shall speak unto them, they shall never cease to prevail until the kingdoms of the world are subdued under my feet, and the earth is given unto the saints, to possess it forever and ever.

**8** But inasmuch as they keep not my commandments, and hearken not to observe all my words, the kingdoms of the world shall prevail against them.

**9** For they were set to be a light unto the world, and to be the saviors of men;

**10** And inasmuch as they are not the saviors of men, they are as salt that has lost its savor, and is thenceforth ***good for nothing*** but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.

**11** But verily I say unto you, I have decreed that your brethren which have been scattered shall return to the lands of their inheritances, and shall build up the waste places of Zion.

**12** For after much tribulation, as I have said unto you in a former commandment, cometh the blessing.

**13** Behold, this is the blessing which I have promised after your tribulations, and the tribulations of your brethren—your redemption, and the redemption of your brethren, even their restoration to the land of Zion, to be established, no more to be thrown down.

**14** Nevertheless, if they pollute their inheritances they shall be thrown down; for I will not spare them if they pollute their inheritances.

**15** Behold, I say unto you, the redemption of Zion must needs come by power;

**16** Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel.

**17** For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ye must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm.

**18** And as your fathers were led at the first, even so shall the redemption of Zion be.

**Revelation 12**

**1** And there appeared a great sign in heaven in the likeness of things on the earth; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

**2** And the woman being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

**3** And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and his throne.

**4** And there appeared another sign in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was delivered, ready to devour her child after it was born.

**5** And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore years. ...

**13** For when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

**14** Therefore to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might flee into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

**15** And the serpent casteth out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

**16** And the earth helpeth the woman, and the earth openeth her mouth, and swalloweth up the flood which the dragon casteth out of his mouth.

**17** Therefore the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have also the testimony of Jesus Christ.

**Revelation 7**

**13** And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

**14** And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, ***These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.***

**15** Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

**16** They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

**17** For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Those who follow Jesus Christ will be tried and must prove themselves faithful to God.

[Jehovah] will not deliver [us] unless we prove ourselves faithful to him in the severest trouble. ***For he that will have his robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb must come up through great tribulation*** [see Revelation 7:13–14], even the greatest of all affliction. ...

Men have to suffer that they may come upon Mount Zion and be exalted above the heavens.

(*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), "Chapter 19: Stand Fast through the Storms of Life," pp. 230–35)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

The sacrifice required of Abraham in the offering up of Isaac, shows that if a man would attain to the keys of the kingdom of an endless life; he must sacrifice all things.[22] When God offers a blessing or knowledge to a man, and he refuses to receive it,[23] he will be damned.

**Footnotes (see below)**
22. Matt. 19:21, D&C 132:51
23. D&C 132:3–4

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 322)

**Matthew 19**

**20** The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

**21** Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

**22** But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

**23** ¶ Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, ***That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.***

**24** And again I say unto you, ***It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 132**

**3** Therefore, prepare thy heart to receive and obey the instructions which I am about to give unto you; for all those who have this law revealed unto them must obey the same.

**4** For behold, I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant; and if ye abide not that covenant, then are ye damned; for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory. ...

**51** Verily, I say unto you: A commandment I give unto mine handmaid, Emma Smith, your wife, whom I have given unto you, that she stay herself and partake not of that which I commanded you to offer unto her; for I did it, saith the Lord, to prove you all, as I did Abraham, and that I might require an offering at your hand, by covenant and sacrifice.

**President Monson**

We live in turbulent times. Often the future is unknown; therefore, it behooves us to prepare for [birth]. When the time for [blood] arrives, the time for preparation is past.

("Are We Prepared?" *Ensign,* September 2014)

Three distinct specific "blood births"

1. The Church (America) gives birth to Zion
2. The tribe of Judah (Israel) gives birth to Jerusalem, and
3. The World gives birth to a sea of glass (Celestial Kingdom)

## Paying the Price; The Wedding Garment; Outer Darkness

**Elder Parley P. Pratt**

I will close by reviewing one more sentence. "Watch ye therefore, ***and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."***

Now I know the habit of praying always in Christendom, that is certain portions of them, they pray in their families and in secret, and have prayer meetings; they pray for this, that, and the other, and say the Lord's prayer and a great many prayers, but the question is do they pray always? He did not tell them to pray the Lord's prayer always, particularly, neither did he tell not to; but this one prayer he did tell them to pray always, and causes it to be written; do WE fulfil it, and do they; it is not to pray always nor to watch always, but it is to pray this particular prayer always—that we may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass and stand before the Son of Man.

Whatever else they might pray in all the varying circumstances of their lives, all right, but this one thing they would be sure to need, ***to be accounted worthy to escape all those things Christ foretold, and stand before him.***

And why should they pray this always? Because it is not only the living generation that had to meet it, and had need to be prepared, but it was a chain of prophecy that would be gradually fulfilling from that time until he comes, and whether they passed through the veil or remained in the flesh, one thing was certain, they would all have to meet some part of it; if they lived in Jerusalem they would have some part of it to meet; or if they were scattered among all nations they would have some part of it to meet; and if they live until there should be signs in the sun, moon, and stars, and upon the earth distress of nations, they would have some part of it to meet; therefore whether they lived in modern or in former times, behind the veil or on this side of it; it was necessary to pray always to be accounted worthy to escape all these things and stand before the Son of Man.

(*Journal of Discourses* 3:19, "Literal Fulfillment of Prophecy, Etc.")

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Consider for a moment, brethren, the fulfillment of the words of the prophet; for we behold that darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the inhabitants thereof—that crimes of every description are increasing among men—vices of great enormity are practiced—the rising generation growing up in the fullness of pride and arrogance—the aged losing every sense of conviction, and seemingly banishing every thought of a day of retribution—intemperance, immorality, extravagance, pride, blindness of heart, idolatry, the loss of natural affection; the love of this world, and indifference toward the things of eternity increasing among those who profess a belief in the religion of heaven, and infidelity spreading itself in consequence of the same—men giving themselves up to commit acts of the foulest kind, and deeds of the blackest dye, blaspheming, defrauding, blasting the reputation of neighbors, stealing, robbing, murdering; advocating error and opposing the truth, forsaking the covenant of heaven, and denying the faith of Jesus—and in the midst of all this, the day of the Lord fast approaching ***when none except those who have won the wedding garment will be permitted to eat and drink in the presence of the Bridegroom, the Prince of Peace!***

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 47, Jan 22, 1834)

**Matthew 22 (JST)**

**1** And Jesus answered the people again, and spake unto them in parables, and said,

**2** The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, who made a marriage for his son.

**3** And when the marriage was ready, he sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding; ***and they would not come.***

**4** Again he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them that are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my oxen, and my fatlings have been killed, and my dinner is ready, and all things are prepared; therefore, come unto the marriage.

**5** ***But they made light of the servants and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise;***

**6** ***And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.***

**7** ***But when the king heard that his servants were dead, he was wroth; and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.***

**8** Then said he to his servants, The wedding is ready; ***but they who were bidden were not worthy.***

**9** Go ye therefore ***into the highways,*** and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

**10** So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

**11** ¶ But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man who had not a wedding garment.

**12** And he said unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.

**13** Then said the king unto his servants, Bind him hand and foot, ***and take and cast him away into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.***

**14** ***For many are called, but few chosen; wherefore, all do not have on the wedding garment.***

**15** ¶ Then went the Pharisees and took counsel how they might entangle him in talk.

**16** And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any; for thou regardest not the person of men.

**17** Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?

**18** But Jesus perceived their wickedness and said, Ye hypocrites! Why tempt ye me? Shew me the tribute money.

**19** And they brought unto him a penny.

**20** He said unto them, Whose image is this, and superscription?

**21** They said unto him, Caesar's. Then said he unto them, ***Render, therefore, unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things which are God's.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 121**

**34** Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?

**35** Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men...

**Doctrine** and Covenants 105

**35** There has been a day of calling, but the time has come for a day of choosing; and let those be chosen that are worthy.

**36** And it shall be manifest unto my servant, by the voice of the Spirit, those that are chosen; and they shall be sanctified;

**37** And inasmuch as they follow the counsel which they receive, they shall have power after many days to accomplish all things pertaining to Zion.

**38** And again I say unto you, sue for peace, not only to the people that have smitten you, but also to all people;

**39** And lift up an ensign of peace, and make a proclamation of peace unto the ends of the earth;

**40** And make proposals for peace unto those who have smitten you, according to the voice of the Spirit which is in you, and all things shall work together for your good.

**Mormon 8**

**35** Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing.

**36** And I know that ye do walk in the pride of your hearts; and there are none ***save a few only*** who do not lift themselves up in the pride of their hearts, unto the wearing of very fine apparel, unto envying, and strifes, and malice, and persecutions, and all manner of iniquities; and your churches, yea, even every one, have become polluted because of the pride of your hearts.

**37** For behold, ye do love money, and your substance, and your fine apparel, and the adorning of your churches, more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted.

**38** O ye pollutions, ye hypocrites, ye teachers, who sell yourselves for that which will canker, why have ye polluted ***the holy church of God?*** Why are ye ashamed to take upon you the name of Christ? Why do ye not think that greater is the value of an endless happiness than that misery which never dies—because of the praise of the world?

**39** ***Why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life,*** and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not?

**40** Yea, why do ye build up your secret abominations to get gain, and cause that widows should mourn before the Lord, and also orphans to mourn before the Lord, ***and also the blood of their fathers and their husbands to cry unto the Lord from the ground, for vengeance upon your heads?***

**41** ***Behold, the sword of vengeance hangeth over you; and the time soon cometh that he avengeth the blood of the saints upon you, for he will not suffer their cries any longer.***

**2 Nephi 28**

**7** Yea, and there shall be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die; and it shall be well with us.

**8** And there shall also be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry; nevertheless, fear God—he will justify in committing a little sin; yea, lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this; and do all these things, for tomorrow we die; and if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God.

**9** Yea, and there shall be many which shall teach after this manner, false and vain and foolish doctrines, and shall be puffed up in their hearts, and shall seek deep to hide their counsels from the Lord; and their works shall be in the dark.

**10** ***And the blood of the saints shall cry from the ground against them.***

**11** Yea, they have all gone out of the way; they have become corrupted.

**12** Because of pride, and because of false teachers, and false doctrine, their churches have become corrupted, and their churches are lifted up; because of pride they are puffed up.

**13** They rob the poor because of their fine sanctuaries; they rob the poor because of their fine clothing; and they persecute the meek and the poor in heart, because in their pride they are puffed up.

**14** They wear stiff necks and high heads; yea, and because of pride, and wickedness, and abominations, and whoredoms, they have all gone

astray ***save it be a few, who are the humble followers of Christ; nevertheless, they are led, that in many instances they do err because they are taught by the precepts of men.***

**15** O the wise, and the learned, and the rich, that are puffed up in the pride of their hearts, and all those who preach false doctrines, and all those who commit whoredoms, and pervert the right way of the Lord, wo, wo, wo be unto them, saith the Lord God Almighty, for they shall be thrust down to hell!

**16** Wo unto them that turn aside the just for a thing of naught and revile against that which is good, and say that it is of no worth! For the day shall come that the Lord God will speedily visit the inhabitants of the earth; and in that day that they are fully ripe in iniquity they shall perish.

**2 Nephi 26**

**29** He commandeth that there shall be no priestcrafts; for, behold, priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion.

**30** Behold, the Lord hath forbidden this thing; wherefore, the Lord God hath given a commandment that all men should have charity, which charity is love. And except they should have charity they were nothing. Wherefore, if they should have charity they would not suffer the laborer in Zion to perish.

**31** ***But the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish.***

**Alma 1**

**25** Now this was a great trial to those that did stand fast in the faith; nevertheless, they were steadfast and immovable in keeping the commandments of God, and they bore with patience the persecution which was heaped upon them.

**26** And when the priests left their labor to impart the word of God unto the people, the people also left their labors to hear the word of God. And when the priest had imparted unto them the word of God they all returned again diligently unto their labors; and the priest, not esteeming himself above his hearers, ***for the preacher was no better than the hearer, neither was the teacher any better than the learner; and thus they were all equal,*** and they did all labor, every man according to his strength.

**27** And they did impart of their substance, every man according to that which he had, to the poor, and the needy, and the sick, and the afflicted; ***and they did not wear costly apparel, yet they were neat and comely.***

**Doctrine** and Covenants 38

**23** But, verily I say unto you, teach one another according to the office wherewith I have appointed you;

**24** And let every man esteem his brother as himself, and practise virtue and holiness before me.

**25** And again I say unto you, let every man esteem his brother as himself.

**26** For what man among you having twelve sons, and is no respecter of them, and they serve him obediently, and he saith unto the one: Be thou clothed in robes and sit thou here; and to the other: Be thou clothed in rags and sit thou there—and looketh upon his sons and saith I am just?

**27** Behold, this I have given unto you as a parable, and it is even as I am. I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine.

**Elder Bednar**

The custom in those days was for the host of a wedding feast—in this parable, the king—to provide garments for the wedding guests. ***Such wedding garments were simple, nondescript robes*** that all attendees wore. In this way, ***rank and station were eliminated,*** and everyone at the feast could mingle ***as equals.***

("Put On Thy Strength, O Zion," General Conference, October 2022)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

Only a man who has paid the price for priesthood power will be able to bring miracles to those he loves and keep his marriage and family safe, now and throughout eternity.

("The Price of Priesthood Power," General Conference, April 2016)

## Making Bare His Arm, Sword in Hand

**The Lord shall divide asunder and reallocate talents, while the wicked and slothful are bound together and both are burnt.**

**D&C 29:17–21. "I Will Take Vengeance upon the Wicked, for They Will Not Repent"**

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** said: "Those with refined senses find it difficult to conceive of the desolation, destruction, and death that will prevail during the final great battles ushering in Christ's reign of peace. So great shall be the slaughter and mass murder, the carnage and gore, the butchery and violent death of warring men, that their decaying bodies 'shall stop the noses of the passengers,' and it shall be a task of mammoth proportions merely to dispose of them. Then shall Ezekiel's prophecy be fulfilled that every feathered fowl and every beast of the field shall assemble to 'eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth.' (Ezek. 39.) And then shall the cry go forth of which John wrote: 'Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.' (Rev. 19:17–18.) That all this is an actual, literal supper, an horrible but real event yet to be, has been specifically confirmed in latter-day revelation. (D. & C. 29:18–21.)" (*Mormon Doctrine,* p. 772.)

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** said: "I know these are unpleasant things. It is not a pleasant thing even for me to stand here and tell you that this is written in the Scriptures. If the Lord has a controversy with the nations, He will put them to the sword. Their bodies shall lie unburied like dung upon the earth. That is not nice, is it, but should we not know it? Is it not our duty to read these things and understand them? Don't you think the Lord has given us these things that we might know and we might prepare ourselves through humility, through repentance, through faith, that we might escape from these dreadful conditions that are portrayed by these ancient prophets? That is why I am reading them. I feel just as keenly as you do about the condition, and I pray for it to come to an end, but I want it to come to an end right." (*Signs of the Times,* pp. 154–55.)

The figure of a cup full of indignation (see D&C 29:17) suggests that the Lord will no longer forbear taking vengeance on the wicked who will not repent. Just as there is a limit to the amount a cup can hold, so there is a limit to the amount of patience the Lord will show towards those who perform wicked acts. To restrain Himself longer would be a disservice to mankind for whom He has offered Himself as Savior. ***Since the blood of His Atonement will not cleanse those who do not repent, pestilence, famine, plague, and destruction are the tools He uses to reclaim those who are past feeling and will not hearken to the still, small voice*** (see 1 Nephi 17:45; D&C 43:20–27). These terrible judgments are the natural result of man's wickedness. God's plea is for people to turn from such wickedness and be spared these awful consequences of sin.

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 61)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

As I have stated before, the gathering of Israel is the most important work taking place on earth today. One crucial element of this gather-

ing is preparing a people who are able, ready, and worthy to receive the Lord when He comes again, a people who have already chosen Jesus Christ over this fallen world, a people who rejoice in their agency to live the higher, holier laws of Jesus Christ.

I call upon you, my dear brothers and sisters, to become this righteous people. Cherish and honor your covenants above all other commitments. As you let God prevail in your life, I promise you greater peace, confidence, joy, and yes, *rest.*

("Overcome the World and Find Rest," General Conference, Oct. 2022)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do.

("The Future of the Church," *Ensign,* April 2020)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

In coming days, we will see the *greatest* manifestations of the Savior's power that the world has *ever* seen. Between now and the time He returns...

("Overcome the World and Find Rest," General Conference, Oct. 2022)

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

The gathering of Israel and the establishment of Zion in the latter days is divided into three periods or phases. The first phase is past; we are now living in the second phase; and the third lies ahead. Prophecies speak of them all. If we do not rightly divide the word of God [see 2 Tim. 2:15] as Paul's expression is, we will face confusion and uncertainty. If on the other hand we correctly envision our proper role and know what should be done today, we shall then be able to use our time, talents, and means to the best advantage in building up the kingdom ***and preparing a people for the second coming of the Son of Man.***

The three phases of this great latter-day work are as follows:

Phase I—From the First Vision, the setting up of the kingdom on April 6, 1830, and the coming of Moses on April 3, 1836, to the secure establishment of the Church in the United States and Canada, a period of about 125 years.

Phase II—From the creation of stakes of [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] in overseas areas, beginning in the 1950s, to the second coming of the Son of Man, ***a period of unknown duration.***

Phase III—***From our Lord's second coming until the kingdom is perfected*** and the knowledge of God covers the earth as the waters cover the sea [see Isa. 11:9] and from then until the end of the Millennium, a period of 1,000 years.

("Come: Let Israel Build Zion," General Conference, April 1977)

**Elder Orson Pratt**

(Phase II) The Gentile believers will gather to Zion; and because of your testimony, all the elect of God, of whatever nation, tongue, and people, will be gathered out year after year; and by-and-by, (Phase III) ***the great and last gathering will be done through instrumentality of angels.*** There will be two, as it were, grinding at a mill; the faithful one will be taken, and the other will be left: there will be two, as it were, sleeping in one bed; one will be picked up by the angels, and the other will be left; and the remnant of the children of God scattered abroad on all the face of the earth ***will receive their last gathering by the angels.***

(*Journal of Discourses,* 7:188)

**D&C 103:15–20. The Lord's People Will Redeem Zion through His Power**

Doctrine and Covenants 103:15–20 clearly teaches that Zion will not be redeemed by human strength alone. The Lord said that the redemption of modern Zion ***will resemble the deliverance of ancient Israel from Egypt*** (see vv. 18–20). ***The biblical account describes how the Lord attended Israel in a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.*** In 1873 **Elder Orson Pratt** taught that the return to Jackson County may be accompanied by similar manifestations:

"I expect that when the Lord leads forth his people to build up the city of Zion, his presence will be visible. When we speak of the presence of the Lord we speak of an exhibition of power. ...

"We shall go back to Jackson County. ***Not that all this people will leave these mountains, or all be gathered together in a camp,*** but when we go back, [this army] will march forward, the glory of God overshadowing their camp by day in the form of a cloud, and a pillar of flaming fire by night, the Lord's voice being uttered forth before his army. ***Such a period will come in the history of this people. ... And his people will go forth and build up Zion according to celestial law.***

***"Will not this produce terror upon all the nations of the earth? Will not armies of this description, though they may not be as numerous as the armies of the world, cause a terror to fall upon the nations?*** The Lord says the banners of Zion shall be terrible. ... When the Lord's presence is there, when his voice is heard, ***and his angels go before the camp,*** it will be telegraphed to the uttermost parts of the earth ***and fear will seize upon all people, especially the wicked, and the knees of the ungodly will tremble in that day, and the high ones that are on high, and the great men of the earth."*** (In *Journal of Discourses,* 15:364.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (2nd ed., 2001), pp. 249–250)

**Elder Heber C. Kimball**

The western boundary of the State of Missouri will be swept so clean of its inhabitants that as President Young tells us, when you return to that place, there will not be left so much as a yellow dog to wag his tail. Before that day comes, however, the Saints will be put to a test that will try the integrity of the best of them. ***The pressure will become so great that the more righteous among them will cry unto the Lord day and night until deliverance come***... Then the Prophet Joseph and others will make their appearance ***and those who have remained faithful will be selected*** to return to Jackson County, Missouri and take part in the building of that beautiful city, the New Jerusalem.

(May 1868, in *Deseret News,* 23 May 1931; see also *Conference Report,* Oct. 1930, p. 58–59; Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball,* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1945, p. 446, CR October 1930, p. 58)

**Luke 17 (JST)**

**26** And as it was in the days of [Noah], so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

**27** They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

**28** Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

**29** But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

**30** Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

**31** In that day, the disciple who shall be on the housetop and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away; and he who is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

**32** ***Remember Lot's wife.***

**33** Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

**34** I tell you, in that night ***there shall be two in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.*** Two shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

**35** Two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

**36** And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord, shall they be taken?

**37** And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is gathered, or in other words, whithersoever the saints are gathered, thither will the eagles be gathered together, or thither will the remainder be gathered together.

**Doctrine and Covenants 105**

**3** But behold, they have not learned to be obedient to the things which I required at their hands, but are full of all manner of evil, and do not impart of their substance, as becometh saints, to the poor and afflicted among them;

**4** And are not united according to the union required by the law of the celestial kingdom;

**5** And Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom; otherwise I cannot receive her unto myself.

**6** And my people must needs be chastened until they learn obedience, if it must needs be, by the things which they suffer.

**D&C 103:19–20. Why Did the Lord Promise Modern Israel That Both His Angels and His Presence Would Go before Them?**

In the final dispensation these circumstances will not exist. Latter-day Saints have been given the higher priesthood and the laws and ordinances that enable them to be brought back into the presence of God (see D&C 84:19–22; 107:18–19). ***There will be a pure people prepared to receive the Lord when He comes*** (see Moses 7:62–64; D&C 35:20–21; 100:16). ***Those who return to redeem Zion will live the laws of the celestial kingdom*** (see D&C 105:5) and thus will be prepared to be led by the presence of the Lord.

**Elder Orson Pratt** spoke of the need to become a sanctified people. "When we go back to Jackson County, we are to go back with power. ***Do you suppose that God will reveal his power among an unsanctified people, who have no regard nor respect for his laws and institutions, but who are filled with covetousness? No. When God shows forth his power among the Latter-day Saints, it will be because there is a union of feeling in regard to doctrine, and in regard to everything that God has placed in their hands; and not only a union, but a sanctification on their part, that there shall not be a spot or wrinkle as it were, but everything shall be as fair as the sun that shines in the heavens."*** (In *Journal of Discourses,* 15:361.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 250)

**Matthew 10**

**28** Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father who is in heaven.

**29** But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven.

**30** ***Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.***

**31** ***For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.***

**32** ***He who loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.***

**33** ***And he who taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me.***

**34** ***He who seeketh to save his life shall lose it; and he who loseth his life for my sake shall find it.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 1**

**13** And the anger of the Lord is kindled, ***and his sword is bathed in heaven,*** and it shall fall upon the inhabitants of the earth.

**14** And the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, ***shall be cut off from among the people;***

**15** For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant;

**16** They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.

**17** Wherefore, I the Lord, knowing the calamity which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments;

**18** And also gave commandments to others, that they should proclaim these things unto the world; and all this that it might be fulfilled, which was written by the prophets—

**19** ***The weak things of the world shall come forth and break down the mighty and strong ones, that man should not counsel his fellow man, neither trust in the arm of flesh***—

**Matthew 5 (JST)**

**32** Therefore, if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

**33** Or if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

**(8-3) Matthew 5:29, 30. "If Thy Right Hand Offend Thee, Cut It Off"**

s.. When the Lord spoke of parts of the body, ***it is evident that he had in mind close friends or relatives*** who endeavored to lead us from the path of rectitude and humble obedience to the divine commandments we receive from the Lord.

"If any friend or relative endeavors to lead a person away from the commandments, it is better to dispense with his friendship and association rather than to follow him in evil practices to destruction. This use of comparison or illustration was as common in ancient days as it is in the present age. We should not, in reading these ancient expressions in the New Testament, take such a statement as this referred to in the words of the Savior recorded by Mark in the literal interpretation. When properly understood it becomes a very impressive figure of speech." (Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions,* 5:79.)

(*The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ and His Apostles,* p. 58)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

I prophesy, that that man ***who tarries after he has an opportunity of going, will be afflicted by the devil.*** Wars are at hand; we must not delay; but are not required to sacrifice. We ought to have the building up of Zion as our greatest object. ***When wars come, we shall have to flee to Zion. The cry is to make haste.*** The last revelation says, Ye shall not have time to have gone over the earth, until these things come. It will come as did the cholera, war, fires, and earthquakes; one pestilence after another, until the Ancient of Days comes, then judgment will be given to the Saints.

(*History of the Church,* 3:390–91)

**Luke 17:29–32. "Remember Lot's Wife"**

While instructing His disciples regarding His Second Coming, Jesus admonished them to "remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:32). A clue to the meaning of this statement is found at the end of Luke 17:31: "Let him

likewise not return back." **Elder Jeffrey R. Holland** discussed the significance of these admonitions:

"The original story [of Lot's wife], of course, comes to us out of the days of Sodom and Gomorrah, when the Lord, having had as much as He could stand of the worst that men and women could do, told Lot and his family to flee because those cities were about to be destroyed. 'Escape for thy life,' the Lord said, *'look not behind thee* … ; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed' (Genesis 19:17; emphasis added).

"… The scriptures tell us what happened at daybreak the morning following their escape:

"'The Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven;

"'And he overthrew those cities.'" (Genesis 19:24–25.) …

"… With the Lord's counsel 'look not behind thee' ringing clearly in her ears, Lot's wife, the record says, 'looked back,' and she was turned into a pillar of salt. …

"… What did Lot's wife do that was so wrong? … Apparently what was wrong with Lot's wife was that she wasn't just *looking* back; in her heart she wanted to *go* back. It would appear that even before they were past the city limits, she was already missing what Sodom and Gomorrah had offered her. …

"It is possible that Lot's wife looked back with resentment toward the Lord for what He was asking her to leave behind. … So it isn't just that she looked back; she looked back *longingly.* In short, her attachment to the past outweighed her confidence in the future. That, apparently, was at least part of her sin.

"… The past is to be learned from but not lived in. … When we have learned what we need to learn and have brought with us the best that we have experienced, then we look ahead, we remember that *faith is always pointed toward the future.* Faith always has to do with blessings and truths and events that will *yet* be efficacious in our lives. So a more theological way to talk about Lot's wife is to say that she did not have faith. She doubted the Lord's ability to give her something better than she already had. Apparently she thought—fatally, as it turned out—that nothing that lay ahead could possibly be as good as those moments she was leaving behind" ("Remember Lot's Wife" [Brigham Young University devotional, Jan. 13, 2009], 2–3; speeches.byu.edu).

(*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), Chapter 18: Luke 15–17)

**Isaiah 3**

**10** Say unto the righteous that it is well with them; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

**11** Woe unto the wicked! for they shall perish; for the reward of their hands shall be upon them.

**12** ¶ And as for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they who lead thee cause thee to err and destroy the way of thy paths.

**13** The LORD standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people.

**14** The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people and the princes thereof; for ye have eaten up the vineyard, and the spoil of the poor is in your houses.

**15** What mean ye? Ye beat my people to pieces and grind the faces of the poor, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

**16** ¶ Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet:

**17** Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover their secret parts.

**18** In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of tinkling ornaments, and cauls, and round tires like the moon,

**19** The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers,

**20** The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings,

**21** The rings, and nose jewels,

**22** The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins,

**23** The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils.

**24** And it shall come to pass, instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle, a rent; and instead of well set hair, baldness; and instead of a stomacher, a girding of sackcloth; burning instead of beauty.

**25** Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war.

**26** And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she shall be desolate and shall sit upon the ground.

**(27)** 1 And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.

**Isaiah 34**

**1** Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it.

**2** For the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter.

**3** Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood.

**4** And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree.

**5** For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment.

**6** The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.

**7** And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness.

**8** For it is the day of the LORD's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.

**9** And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch.

**10** It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.

**11** ¶ But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness.

**12** They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing.

**13** And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls.

**14** The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest.

**15** There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.

**16** ¶ Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them.

**17** And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.

**(15-27) Isaiah 34:1–10. What Does the Term Idumea Mean and Why Is It Used?**

The Second Coming of Christ will be a day of vengeance and recompense. As formerly seen, "the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations," for "he hath delivered them to the slaughter" (Isaiah 34:2). Moreover, the heavenly bodies, those luminaries such as the sun, stars, and moon, "shall be dissolved," that is, "shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine" while "the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll" (v. 4). Isaiah's description is reminiscent of a similar one in Doctrine and Covenants 88:95 in which we are taught that when the Lord returns, "the curtain of heaven shall be unfolded, as a scroll is unfolded after it is rolled up, and the face of the Lord shall be unveiled." Then the sword of the Lord, which represents His power and judgment, "shall come down upon Idumea," or the world (Isaiah 34:5).

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** wrote: "Now, some Bible commentators, because of the name of Idumea, a little country east of the Jordan, is mentioned, have an idea that this had reference to that little country; but the term Idumea is one that the Lord uses to mean the world. You will find it so recorded in Section 1 of the Doctrine and Covenants. He is speaking of the world." (*The Signs of the Times,* p. 150.)

Blood is a biblical symbol of wickedness. The whole earth, stained with blood, will experience a "great slaughter" at the time of the Second Coming, for "it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion" (Isaiah 34:6, 8).

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** again: "That is to take place in the dispensation of the Fulness of Times, and this prophecy had nothing to do with that little country called Idumea but to the nations of the earth" (*Signs of the Times,* p. 151).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 168)

**(15-28) Isaiah 34:16–17. What Is the "Book of the Lord"?**

Not all people, of course, are wicked, and those who are not will be saved from the destroying fire—both the spiritual (hell) and the physical (see 1 Nephi 22:15–17). The names of the children of the Lord who have kept their covenants are enrolled in a special book known as "the book of the Lord" (Isaiah 34:16), "the book of the law of God" (D&C 85:5; see also v. 9, 11), or "the book of life" (Revelation 20:12). Records of our works are kept on earth by the Lord's clerks, but the book of life is the record kept in heaven. Both records should agree (see D&C 128:6–9). Of those whose names are recorded in the heavenly book, "no one of these shall fail" (Isaiah 34:16). ***The promise that "none shall want [lack] their mate" (JST, Isaiah 34:16) is particularly interesting to Latter-day Saints since we know that only through the ordinance of celestial marriage can we have our mate eternally.***

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 168)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

I explained concerning the coming of the Son of Man; also that it is a false idea that the Saints will escape all the judgments, whilst the wicked suffer; for all flesh is subject to suffer, and "the righteous shall hardly escape;" ***still many of the Saints will escape, for the just shall live by faith;*** yet many of the righteous shall fall a prey to disease, to pestilence, etc., by reason of the weakness of the flesh, and yet be saved in the Kingdom of God. So that it is an unhallowed principle to say that such and such have transgressed because they have been prayed upon by disease or death, for all flesh is subject to death;

("Saints Not to Escape Judgments," *TPJS,* p. 162)

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**55** And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, ***save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;***

**56** And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard; for it is mine; I have bought it with money.

**57** Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen.

**58** And inasmuch as they gather together against you, avenge me of mine enemies, that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land.

**Brigham Young**

Now, where a man in this Church says, "I don't want but one wife, I will live my religion with one," he will perhaps be saved in the celestial kingdom; but when he gets there he will not find himself in possession of any wife at all. He has had a talent that he has hid up. He will come forward and say, "Here is that which thou gavest me, I have not wasted it, and here is the one talent," and he will not enjoy it, but it will be taken and given to those who have improved the talents they received, and he will find himself without any wife, and he will remain single forever and ever."

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 16, 160)

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

When the wife is faithful and desires to obey the divine law and the husband is rebellious, or unwilling to obey the will of the Lord, if she maintains her integrity to the best of her ability, she will be given to another husband in eternity and will receive all the blessings of the celestial kingdom.

(*Answers to Gospel Questions,* Volume 3, "Salvation of Women Whose Husbands Will Not Embrace the Gospel," p. 5)

**George A. Smith**

It is very well understood that, by many of the people, the law of marriage is regarded as something instituted by God; and that men, in their laws and regulations on the subject, have undertaken to govern their fellows too much. Our fathers Abraham and Jacob and many of the prophets took steps in this matter, which are now denounced by a large portion of Christendom as very wrong; and yet these very persons, in their prayers and preachings, claim that they are going to "Abraham's bosom." I can tell any man that wishes to murder, rob and plunder, and deprive of liberty a Latter-day Saint because he believes and practices plurality of wives, that he need never expect to dwell in "Abraham's bosom," or Father Abraham will not cast his wives out to receive such narrow-minded men. ***I can further tell them that, if ever they come to the gates of the New Jerusalem, they will there find the names of the twelve sons of Jacob; and if they believe with all their hearts that Jacob and his sons, most of whom were polygamists, were wicked men, and most of the sons bastards, they had better stay outside; in fact they will not be permitted to enter.*** Unless they can acknowledge these twelve sons as lawful and legitimate sons, in accordance with the law of God, they will have to stay outside, and "without are dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, idolaters," and everybody that loves and makes a lie.

May God enable us, one and all, to be truly prepared to enter through the gates into the city, is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

("The Lord's Supper, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses,* Volume 14, 210)

**George A. Smith**

All good Christians are flattering themselves with the hope that they will finally enter the gates of the New Jerusalem. I presume this is the hope of all denominations—Catholics, Protestants, Greeks and all who believe in the Bible. Suppose they go there, what will they find? They will find at the twelve gates twelve angels, and "names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel." The names of the twelve sons of Jacob, the polygamist. ***Can a monogamist enter there? "And the walls of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb;" and at the gates the names of the twelve tribes of Israel—from the twelve sons of the four wives of Jacob. Those who denounce Patriarchal Marriage will have to stay without and never walk the golden streets. And any man or woman that lifts his or her voice to proclaim against a plurality of wives, under the Government of God, will have to seek an inheritance outside of that city.*** For "there shall in no wise enter into it, anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie, for without are sorcerers, whoremongers, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Is not the man that denounces Celestial Marriage a liar? Does he not work abomination? "I Jesus have sent mine Angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of (the polygamist) David, the bright and the morning star."

May God enable us to keep His law, for "blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gate into the city." Amen.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 13, pp. 37–42)

**1 Nephi 14**

**6** Therefore, wo be unto the Gentiles if it so be that they harden their hearts against the Lamb of God.

**7** For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men; a work which shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or on the other—either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds unto their being brought down into captivity, ***and also into destruction, both temporally and spiritually,*** according to the captivity of the devil, of which I have spoken.

**8** And it came to pass that when the angel had spoken these words, he said unto me: Rememberest thou the covenants of the Father unto the house of Israel? I said unto him, Yea.

**9** And it came to pass that he said unto me: Look, and behold that great and abominable church, which is the mother of abominations, whose founder is the devil.

**10** And he said unto me: Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth.

**11** And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters; and she had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people.

**12** And it came to pass that I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and its numbers were few, because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God, were also upon all the face of the earth; and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small, because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw.

**13** And it came to pass that I beheld that the great mother of abominations did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God.

**14** And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.

**15** And it came to pass that I beheld that the wrath of God was poured out upon that great and abominable church, insomuch that there were wars and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth.

**16** And as there began to be wars and rumors of wars among all the nations which belonged to the mother of abominations, the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold, the wrath of God is upon the mother of harlots; and behold, thou seest all these things—

**17** And when the day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon the mother of harlots, which is the great and abominable church of all the earth, whose founder is the devil, then, ***at that day, the work of the Father shall commence, in preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants, which he hath made to his people who are of the house of Israel.***

**3 Nephi 21**

**12** And my people who are a remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, yea, in the midst of them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he go through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

**13** Their hand shall be lifted up upon their adversaries, and all their enemies shall be cut off.

**14** Yea, wo be unto the Gentiles except they repent; for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Father, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots;

**15** And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strongholds;

**16** And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thy land, and thou shalt have no more soothsayers;

**17** Thy graven images I will also cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee, and thou shalt no more worship the works of thy hands;

**18** And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee; so will I destroy thy cities.

**19** And it shall come to pass that all lyings, and deceivings, and envyings, and strifes, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, shall be done away.

**20** For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel;

**21** And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.

**22** But if they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance;

**23** And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.

**24** And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem.

**25** And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst.

**26** ***And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, yea, even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem.***

**27** ***Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, with the Father to prepare the way whereby they may come unto me, that they may call on the Father in my name.***

**28** ***Yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father among all nations in preparing the way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance.***

**29** ***And they shall go out from all nations; and they shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight, for I will go before them, saith the Father, and I will be their rearward.***

**Isaiah 35**

**1** The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

**2** It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God.

**3** ¶ Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

**4** Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you.

**5** Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

**6** Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

**7** And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

**8** And an highway shall be there; for a way shall be cast up, and it shall be called the way of holiness. ***The unclean shall not pass over upon it; but it shall be cast up for those who are clean; and the wayfaring men, though they are accounted fools, shall not err therein.***

**9** ***No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there:***

**10** ***And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,*** and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

**(15-30) Isaiah 35:8–10. Who Are the "Ransomed of the Lord" and What Does the Future Hold for Them?**

Isaiah 35:8–10 is closely related to Doctrine and Covenants 133:26–34 and is generally acknowledged to refer to the return of the ten tribes. But these references may also include all the tribes. ***Only the "redeemed" of the Lord, that is the righteous, shall tread the "highway" or "way of holiness"—"the unclean shall not pass over it."*** Since Ephraim is the source of the ten tribes' blessings (see D&C 133:32), it stands to reason that Ephraim must be gathered first. ***The ten tribes may then "come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads"*** (Isaiah 35:10). Judah also shall be gathered as part of this same picture. The **Prophet Joseph Smith** wrote: "Our western tribes of Indians are descendants from that Joseph who was sold into Egypt, and … the land of America is a promised land unto them, and unto it all the tribes of Israel will come, with as many of the Gentiles as shall comply with the requisitions of the new covenant. But the tribe of Judah will return to old Jerusalem. The city of Zion spoken of by David, in the one hundred and second Psalm, will be built upon the land of America, 'And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads.' [Isaiah 35:10]; and then they will be delivered from the overflowing scourge that shall pass through the land. But Judah shall obtain deliverance at Jerusalem. [see Joel 2:32; Isaiah 26:20–21; Jeremiah 31:12; Psalm 1:5; Ezekiel 34:11–13]. These are testimonies that the Good Shepherd will put forth his own sheep, and lead them out from all nations where they have been scattered in a cloudy and dark day, to Zion, and to Jerusalem; besides many more testimonies which might be brought." (*Teachings,* p. 17.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (2003), pp. 168–169)

**Elder David A. Bednar**

You Don't Have to Die to Find Out Where You'll Go on the Day of Judgement

How will I know where I am going to go? You don't have to die to find out. If living the gospel for you is hard, if it's a chore. "Aaah, if I just wasn't a latter-day saint, I could have fun!" If that's what you're like when you die, guess where you're going to go…With other people who feel the same way! Because that's the law you have learned to love.

If, however, during the course of your life, a little at a time, you have learned to love living the gospel, guess where you're going when you die, with people who love living the gospel. The Lord is not going to have to tell you! When you come into His presence, you won't have to wonder if He is in a really good mood today. I hope He gives me some extra points, so my grade will be a little better. When you come into His presence, you will go where you know you belong.

Based on what we have desired to do and what we have become while we have lived on the Earth. If you can look your Bishop in the eye, because you are worthy and clean. You already know what the day of judgement will be like. There is no awkwardness, no embarrassment, no shame. Living the gospel is not hard, it's not living the gospel that is hard, and it is a joy to live it.

(Questions and answers with Elder David A. Bednar, of the Quorum of the Twelve, 23 February 2016 in Chile)

**Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone**

It is not difficult to understand why the great God in heaven has reserved these special spirits for the final work of the kingdom prior to his millennial reign.

My heart, like Enoch's, seems to swell "wide as eternity" (Moses 7:41) as I consider what our youth and those being born in this time will accomplish. This generation will face trials and troubles that will exceed those of their pioneer forebears. Our generation has had some periods of respite from the foe. The future generation will have little or none. But their great faith in the Lord will give them needed strength. …

This is a chosen generation. …

What you do now, today, may have far-reaching consequences. I believe today's Aaronic Priesthood and young women of the Church will lead the youth of the world through the most trying time in history. It is time for the Aaronic Priesthood to come of age. The rod of iron leading to the tree of life for you, our young men, may well be the implementation of the complete and full work of the Aaronic Priesthood. As we marshal your forces in your true identity as deacons, teachers, and priests in the holy Aaronic Priesthood, we mobilize an army of Israel such as has never been known before in the Church. Your numbers are legion. I believe you will be expected to perform the most important work in this dispensation, with the exception of the work done by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

("A Champion of Youth," General Conference, October ***1987***)

# Jesus's Macro Last Day Timeline

## The Last Days

There are three themes that will crop up over and over again, when the Lord speaks of "the Last Days" (2 Nephi 27, Doctrine and Covenants 45, etc. etc.) and those are:

1. Blood of Saints crying from the ground against us
2. God of miracles, same yesterday, today, forever—only works according to faith, woe unto us for not experiencing these miracles because we lack faith
3. The wisdom of our wise and prudent shall be hid

In many locations, such as 2 Nephi 27, all three of those are listed in the same location, where as in other locations in scripture, sometimes only one of the three themes is hammered home (such as "faith → miracles" done by Moroni in Moroni chapter 7). Regardless however, all three of these are huge themed issues dealing with "the Last Days" as far as the Lord Jesus Christ is concerned. So the next question would be, "is there an answer to why those three are an issue? Is there an answer to how we can solve or prevent ourselves from falling into these three pits?

Yes. There is. And the "simpleness of the way" has caused most of this generation to stumble, lose the Holy Ghost, and become unwise virgins.

## The Book of Mormon

**Doctrine and Covenants 84**

> **43** And I now give unto you a commandment to beware concerning yourselves, to give diligent heed to the words of eternal life.
>
> **44** For you shall live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God.
>
> **45** For the word of the Lord is truth, and whatsoever is truth is light, and whatsoever is light is Spirit, even the Spirit of Jesus Christ.
>
> **46** And the Spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the world; and the Spirit enlighteneth every man through the world, that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit.
>
> **47** And every one that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit cometh unto God, even the Father.
>
> **48** And the Father teacheth him of the covenant which he has renewed and confirmed upon you, which is confirmed upon you for your sakes, and not for your sakes only, but for the sake of the whole world.
>
> **49** And the whole world lieth in sin, and groaneth under darkness and under the bondage of sin.
>
> **50** And by this you may know they are under the bondage of sin, because they come not unto me.
>
> **51** For whoso cometh not unto me is under the bondage of sin.
>
> **52** And whoso receiveth not my voice is not acquainted with my voice, and is not of me.
>
> **53** And by this you may know the righteous from the wicked, and that the whole world groaneth under sin and darkness even now.
>
> **54** And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—
>
> **55** Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation.
>
> **56** And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all.
>
> **57** And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written—
>
> **58** That they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom; otherwise there remaineth a scourge and judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion.
>
> **59** For shall the children of the kingdom pollute my holy land? Verily, I say unto you, Nay.
>
> **60** Verily, verily, I say unto you who now hear my words, which are my voice, blessed are ye inasmuch as you receive these things

Because we have neglected The Book of Mormon, possibly not in what we say about The Book of Mormon, but in our lack of doing according to that which is written therein, the blood of the Saints cries from the ground against us, miracles have ceased, we preach against such miracles and the need of them, and the wisdom of our wise and prudent has thoroughly been hidden… If we were actually internalizing and having faith in The Book of Mormon, we would have produced the fruit meet for the Father's kingdom, we would have redeemed and built the New Jerusalem of our God, but because of that failure and continued failure, if we don't produce that fruit, there remaineth a scourge and judgment to be poured out ***upon the children of Zion!***

It is crucial therefore, if we desire to be "children of the light" (1 Thess. 5; 5) to read, understand, and then live with faith according to The Book of Mormon. Then shall the veil be rent, then shall the greater things be made manifest unto us (Ether 4), then shall the things which were written by John the Revelator in the book of Revelation be understood and made manifest, etc. etc.

**Joseph Smith** said, "I never hear of a man being damned for believing too much; but they are damned for unbelief" (*TPJS,* p. 373). There are members of the Church today who are attempting to make every prophecy figurative, metaphorical etc. And while they do it, they feign concern for those in the Church who are interpreting the scriptures in the way that **Joseph** taught us to interpret scriptures: "The scriptures say what they mean and mean what they say…What is the rule of interpretation? Just no interpretation at all. Understand it precisely as it reads" (*TPJS,* pp. 264, 276). Members will be damned for not believing enough, not because they believed too much (read the first couple chapters of A Voice of Warning by Parley P. Pratt for further breakdown on this concept).

Now that we understand "points of reference," now that we understand "the marvelous work and a wonder," now that we understand what these terms mean and how the scriptures are to be read—let's now read Jesus Christ's Macro Last-day Timeline that he gave to the ancient inhabitants of the Americas, and let us see if we can make sense of it.

## 3 Nephi 20–26

Jesus appears to the Nephites in 3 Nephi chapter 11 and does many things from chapters 11–19, including instituting the Sacrament, ordaining twelve apostles etc. In chapter 16 the Lord attempts to give some last days timeline but discovers that the people are mentally unprepared so he takes a break and then gets back into it in chapter 20. From chapters 20 to Mormon's words in chapter 26, the Lord finishes laying out ***His*** last days timeline. Obviously the Lord does not give you dates, but the Lord does give you points of reference. Let's go through them.

**3 Nephi 16**

**4** And I command you that ye shall write these sayings after I am gone, that if it so be that my people at Jerusalem, they who have seen me and been with me in my ministry, do not ask the Father in my name, that they may receive a knowledge of you by the Holy Ghost, and also of the other tribes whom they know not of, that these sayings which ye shall write shall be kept and shall be manifested unto the Gentiles, that through the fulness of the Gentiles, the remnant of their seed, who shall be scattered forth upon the face of the earth because of their unbelief, may be brought in, or may be brought to a knowledge of me, their Redeemer.

**5** And then will I gather them in from the four quarters of the earth; and then will I fulfil the covenant which the Father hath made unto all the people of the house of Israel.

Points of Reference:

- → The Nephites write what the Lord commanded them to write
- → The apostles in Old Jerusalem never ask therefore they never receive the knowledge from Holy Ghost and thus don't write it down
- → The fullness of the Gentiles is ushered in and with it the Book of Mormon
- → The Lord then begins to gather in scattered Israel through the fullness of the Gentiles and the Book of Mormon

**3 Nephi 16**

**6** And blessed are the Gentiles, because of their belief in me, in and of the Holy Ghost, which witnesses unto them of me and of the Father.

**7** Behold, because of their belief in me, saith the Father, and because of the unbelief of you, O house of Israel, in the latter day shall the truth come unto the Gentiles, that the fulness of these things shall be made known unto them.

Points of Reference:

- → The house of Israel will suffer from unbelief
- → the truth and fullness goes to the Gentiles

**3 Nephi 16**

**8** But wo, saith the Father, unto the unbelieving of the Gentiles—for notwithstanding they have come forth upon the face of this land, and have scattered my people who are of the house of Israel; and my people who are of the house of Israel have been cast out from among them, and have been trodden under feet by them;

**9** And because of the mercies of the Father unto the Gentiles, and also the judgments of the Father upon my people who are of the house of Israel, verily, verily, I say unto you, that after all this, and I have caused my people who are of the house of Israel to be smitten, and to be afflicted, and to be slain, and to be cast out from among them, and to become hated by them, and to become a hiss and a byword among them

Points of Reference:

- → The Father blesses the Gentiles with many mercies
- → The Gentiles come to the land of promise
- → They scatter the remnants of the house of Israel on the American continent
- → They cast the remnants of the house of Israel from out among them, they trod them under their feet, they smite them, afflict them, slay them, hate them and turn them into a hiss and a byword

Note: if you are interested in the Meso-American model versus the Hill-top model, this is a series of prophecies that was only fulfilled in one place.

**3 Nephi 16**

**10** And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you: At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; and if they shall do all those things, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them.

**11** And then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them.

**12** And I will show unto thee, O house of Israel, that the Gentiles shall not have power over you; but I will remember my covenant unto you, O house of Israel, and ye shall come unto the knowledge of the fulness of my gospel.

Points of Reference:

- → The Gentile countries become lifted up in their pride above all other nations and are filled with lying, priestcraft, wickedness
- → If the Gentile nation rejects the fullness then the Lord will remove the fullness (those that obey the Lord will be separated from those who do not)
- → The Lord remembers the covenants/promises He made unto the House of Israel

**3 Nephi 16**

**13** But if the Gentiles will repent and return unto me, saith the Father, behold they shall be numbered among my people, O house of Israel.

**14** And I will not suffer my people, who are of the house of Israel, to go through among them, and tread them down, saith the Father.

**15** But if they will not turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, I will suffer them, yea, I will suffer my people, O house of Israel, that they shall go through among them, and shall tread them down, and they shall be as salt that hath lost its savor, which is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of my people, O house of Israel.

Points of Reference:

- → Gentiles make choice to repent or choice not to repent
- → Repentant converts are numbered with God's people while those that don't repent will be destroyed by God's people (1 Nephi 14:7)

**3 Nephi 16**

**16** Verily, verily, I say unto you, thus hath the Father commanded me—that I should give unto this people this land for their inheritance.

**17** And then the words of the prophet Isaiah shall be fulfilled, which say:

**18** Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing, for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion.

**19** Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

**20** The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God.

Points of Reference:

- → The Lord makes bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God (i.e. "the redemption of Zion")
- → The Lord remembering the covenants/promises He made unto the House of Israel is further identified here as "giving this land for an inheritance"

→ The words of Isaiah are fulfilled as the watchmen lift up the voice together and sing praises having seen the Lord redeem and bring again Zion

**3 Nephi 20**

**11** Ye remember that I spake unto you, and said that when the words of Isaiah should be fulfilled—behold they are written, ye have them before you, therefore search them—

**12** And verily, verily, I say unto you, that when they shall be fulfilled then is the fulfilling of the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people, O house of Israel.

**13** And then shall the remnants, which shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, be gathered in from the east and from the west, and from the south and from the north; and they shall be brought to the knowledge of the Lord their God, who hath redeemed them.

**14** And the Father hath commanded me that I should give unto you this land, for your inheritance.

Points of Reference:

→ The marvelous work and a wonder (the Lord making bare His arm, the words of Isaiah, etc.)

→ A worldwide gathering in and unto New Jerusalem. The prophet Joseph Smith taught that there will be 3 worldwide gatherings taking place at this time: one, the worldwide gathering of the elect to Zion, two, the Jews to Old Jerusalem, three, the wicked to be destroyed (*TPJS,* p. 231).

→ Those of the tribe of Joseph will be allotted their permanent inheritances in Zion at this time.

**3 Nephi 20**

**15** And I say unto you, that if the Gentiles do not repent after the blessing which they shall receive, after they have scattered my people—

**16** Then shall ye, who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, go forth among them; and ye shall be in the midst of them who shall be many; and ye shall be among them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, and as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he goeth through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

**17** Thy hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off.

**18** And I will gather my people together as a man gathereth his sheaves into the floor.

**19** For I will make my people with whom the Father hath covenanted, yea, I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass. And thou shalt beat in pieces many people; and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. And behold, I am he who doeth it.

**20** And it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that the sword of my justice shall hang over them at that day; and except they repent it shall fall upon them, saith the Father, yea, even upon all the nations of the Gentiles.

**21** And it shall come to pass that I will establish my people, O house of Israel.

**22** And behold, this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; and it shall be a New Jerusalem. And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you.

Points of Reference:

→ Marvelous work and a wonder

→ New Jerusalem is established

→ Christ in the midst of New Jerusalem

→ Ultimatum presented to all Gentile nations (repent and join or be destroyed)

→ Gentiles that repent will be gathered in as a man gathereth sheaves into the floor in unto New Jerusalem, if Gentiles do not repent then the house of Israel among them will continue to destroy them.

→ The Lord consecrates the gain of the house of Israel unto Himself and will make their horns iron and their hoofs brass

Note: **Joseph Fielding Smith** questioned:

> Are we justified in applying [the remnant] mainly to the Lamanites and saying that they are to go forth as a young lion pouring out vengeance upon the gentiles? Also does the phrase, 'Ye who are a remnant of the house of Jacob' in verse 16, have reference just to the Lamanites? The verses which follow indicate that it has reference to the remnants of Israel which had been scattered in all lands. To apply it to the Lamanites in face of theme of this discourse, in my judgment, narrows it too greatly.
>
> (*Doctrines of Salvation,* 2:249–250)

**3 Nephi 20**

**27** And after that ye were blessed then fulfilleth the Father the covenant which he made with Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed—unto the pouring out of the Holy Ghost through me upon the Gentiles, which blessing upon the Gentiles shall make them mighty above all, unto the scattering of my people, O house of Israel.

**28** And they shall be a scourge unto the people of this land. Nevertheless, when they shall have received the fulness of my gospel, then if they shall harden their hearts against me I will return their iniquities upon their own heads, saith the Father.

Points of Reference:

→ The children of the covenant are blessed

→ Ephraim mingles with the seed of the kingdoms of the earth

→ The Holy Ghost or intelligence of God leavens the loaf of the gentile nations

→ The Gentiles become mighty above all because of this

→ Gentiles scatter what's left of the house of Israel on the American continent

→ These gentiles become the scourge (i.e. The Assyrian, The Destroyer, etc.) in America

→ The fullness of the gospel is restored (i.e. Celestial law)

→ Gentiles are presented with the ultimatum (1 Nephi 14:7)

**3 Nephi 20**

**29** And I will remember the covenant which I have made with my people; and I have covenanted with them that I would gather them together in mine own due time, that I would give unto them again the land of their fathers for their inheritance, which is the land of Jerusalem, which is the promised land unto them forever, saith the Father.

Points of Reference:

→ The Lord covenanted/made promises to Israel regarding land inheritances

→ Israel loses land inheritances

→ The Lord's own due time

→ The Lord remembers his covenants/promises and gives unto them *again* the land of their fathers

**3 Nephi 20**

**30** And it shall come to pass that the time cometh, when the fulness of my gospel shall be preached unto them;

**31** And they shall believe in me, that I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and shall pray unto the Father in my name.

**32** Then shall their watchmen lift up their voice, and with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye.

**33** Then will the Father gather them together again, and give unto them Jerusalem for the land of their inheritance.

**34** Then shall they break forth into joy—Sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Father hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

**35** The Father hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of the Father; and the Father and I are one.

**36** And then shall be brought to pass that which is written: Awake, awake again, and put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city, for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.

**37** Shake thyself from the dust; arise, sit down, O Jerusalem; loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

**38** For thus saith the Lord: Ye have sold yourselves for naught, and ye shall be redeemed without money.

**39** Verily, verily, I say unto you, that my people shall know my name; yea, in that day they shall know that I am he that doth speak.

**40** And then shall they say: How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings unto them, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings unto them of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion: Thy God reigneth!

Points of Reference:

- → Israel sells themselves for nought (priestcraft)
- → The watchman wake up and rend the veil of unbelief (Ether 4) and "hear Him"
- → The Lord makes bare his arm/Redemption of Zion/etc. and does it "without money"; he does it with those watchmen who raise up the voice without money and without price
- → The watchmen see eye to eye, raise their voices in praise as the Lord does this work
- → The New Jerusalem, in Jackson County, is raised as an ensign

**3 Nephi 20**

**41** And then shall a cry go forth: Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch not that which is unclean; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.

**42** For ye shall not go out with haste nor go by flight; for the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel shall be your rearward.

Points of Reference:

- → The New Jerusalem, in Jackson County, is raised as an ensign
- → There are "Little Egypts" all over the globe as people leave and walk on the "ways of Holiness" to New Jerusalem (Isaiah 35: 8–10); o one shall go in haste, for only the righteous can walk on those paths, not even the beasts

**3 Nephi 20**

**43** Behold, my servant shall deal prudently; he shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.

**44** As many were astonished at thee—his visage was so marred, more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men—

**45** So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him, for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

**46** Verily, verily, I say unto you, all these things shall surely come, even as the Father hath commanded me. Then shall this covenant which the Father hath covenanted with his people be fulfilled; and then shall Jerusalem be inhabited again with my people, and it shall be the land of their inheritance.

Points of Reference:

- → Joseph Smith was marred
- → Joseph Smith works prudently
- → Joseph "shall be exalted and extolled and be very high," sprinkling the nations, shutting the mouths of kings
- → The New Jerusalem is established (which is the covenant he has made with his people)
- → Jerusalem will be inhabited by the righteous again and be made a land of their inheritance

**3 Nephi 21**

**1** And verily I say unto you, I give unto you a sign, that ye may know the time when these things shall be about to take place—that I shall gather in, from their long dispersion, my people, O house of Israel, and shall establish again among them my Zion;

**2** And behold, this is the thing which I will give unto you for a sign—for verily I say unto you that when these things which I declare unto you, and which I shall declare unto you hereafter of myself, and by the power of the Holy Ghost which shall be given unto you of the Father, shall be made known unto the Gentiles that they may know concerning this people who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, and concerning this my people who shall be scattered by them;

**3** Verily, verily, I say unto you, when these things shall be made known unto them of the Father, and shall come forth of the Father, from them unto you;

**4** For it is wisdom in the Father that they should be established in this land, and be set up as a free people by the power of the Father, that these things might come forth from them unto a remnant of your seed, that the covenant of the Father may be fulfilled which he hath covenanted with his people, O house of Israel;

**5** Therefore, when these works and the works which shall be wrought among you hereafter shall come forth from the Gentiles, unto your seed which shall dwindle in unbelief because of iniquity;

**6** For thus it behooveth the Father that it should come forth from the Gentiles, that he may show forth his power unto the Gentiles, for this cause that the Gentiles, if they will not harden their hearts, that they may repent and come unto me and be baptized in my name and know of the true points of my doctrine, that they may be numbered among my people, O house of Israel;

**7** And when these things come to pass that thy seed shall begin to know these things—it shall be a sign unto them, that they may know that the work of the Father hath already commenced unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he hath made unto the people who are of the house of Israel.

Points of Reference:

- → Jesus' words that he spoke to the Nephites shall be written down
- → The Nephites will dwindle in unbelief because of iniquity
- → The Gentiles are established in America and set up as a free people
- → The Church is restored and the Book of Mormon revealed
- → Many Gentiles are converted, baptized, and are numbered among the house of Israel
- → The Lamanites begin to know the Book of Mormon and to blossom as a rose, which is a sign to know that the gathering of Israel and the establishment of New Jerusalem is nigh at hand (Doctrine and Covenants 49; 24)

**3 Nephi 21**

**8** And when that day shall come, it shall come to pass that kings shall shut their mouths; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

**9** For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and a marvelous work among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them.

**10** But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them. Yet I will heal him, for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.

Points of Reference:

→ Joseph Smith is marred (martyred; see footnote)
→ The Lamanites blossom as a rose
→ Joseph Smith is healed (resurrected)
→ Kings shall shut their mouths, for that which they see next and will begin to consider are things that they had not heard before, i.e. ***the*** marvelous work and a wonder, the Lord making bare his arm in the eyes of all nations, etc.

**3 Nephi 21**

**11** Therefore it shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words, who am Jesus Christ, which the Father shall cause him to bring forth unto the Gentiles, and shall give unto him power that he shall bring them forth unto the Gentiles, (it shall be done even as Moses said) they shall be cut off from among my people who are of the covenant.

**12** And my people who are a remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, yea, in the midst of them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he go through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

**13** Their hand shall be lifted up upon their adversaries, and all their enemies shall be cut off.

Points of Reference:

→ Joseph Smith is resurrected and is given the words of Jesus Christ (i.e. The Celestial Law, the sealed portion, etc.)
→ Joseph Smith and "the remnant of Jacob" (i.e., Joseph's Boys) march back and redeem Jackson County Missouri
→ Those that believe and repent are numbered among the Lord's people and the house of Israel while those that do not believe will be cut off, i.e., the ultimatum (1 Nephi 14:7)

**3 Nephi 21**

**14** Yea, wo be unto the Gentiles except they repent; for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Father, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots;

**15** And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strongholds;

**16** And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thy land, and thou shalt have no more soothsayers;

**17** Thy graven images I will also cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee, and thou shalt no more worship the works of thy hands;

**18** And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee; so will I destroy thy cities.

**19** And it shall come to pass that all lyings, and deceivings, and envyings, and strifes, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, shall be done away.

**20** For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel;

**21** And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.

Points of Reference:

→ Joseph Smith presents ultimatum to Gentiles and Gentile nations
→ If they refuse, all of the destructions promised will take place (1 Nephi 14:7)

**3 Nephi 21**

**22** But if they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance;

**23** And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.

Points of Reference:

→ Joseph Smith presents ultimatum to Gentiles and Gentile nations
→ Those who repent and listen are numbered in the house of Israel and get to take part in the building of New Jerusalem (depending on their tribe they will be given permanent inheritances)

Note: In order to further understand who is who, let's breakdown the three groups.

**3 Nephi 21:23. "The Remnant of Jacob"**

> "The 'New Jerusalem' of the last days will be built on the American continent by (1) 'the remnant of Jacob,' (2) the Gentiles who 'shall come into the covenant and be numbered among [them],' and (3) as many of the house of Israel as shall come.' (3 Nephi 21:22–25. Read also 3 Nephi 20:22; Ether 13:1–12.)
>
> (*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (1996), PDF Version, p. 143)

The **tenth Article of Faith** reads:

> We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the ten tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent...

So we know of three different groups: the remnant of Jacob would be Ephraim and Manasseh, the watchmen on the towers, Joseph's Boys, etc. These are the only ones who will be given "this land" as their inheritance. The second group is converts who are adopted into that tribe, i.e., into the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, for it reads they shall be "numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, ***unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance."*** So, they will clearly be adopted into the tribe of Joseph. Finally, the third group refers to anyone gathered that is not from the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh (these will obtain their permanent inheritances after the Mount of Olives). The lost ten tribes return as a body in verse 26, after the New Jerusalem has already been redeemed, but before the Anointing, so this is not talking about them.

**3 Nephi 21**

**24** And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem.

**25** And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst.

Points of Reference:

→ The Lord's people ("my people"—The Church) gather in ***scattered*** Israel unto the New Jerusalem with assistance

→ Jesus comes to New Jerusalem personally (first of many Adam-on-di-Ahman appearances—we know this isn't the New Jerusalem visit yet, as the ten tribes have not returned yet)

**3 Nephi 21**

**26** And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, yea, even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem.

**27** Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, with the Father to prepare the way whereby they may come unto me, that they may call on the Father in my name.

**28** Yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father among all nations in preparing the way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance.

**29** And they shall go out from all nations; and they shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight, for I will go before them, saith the Father, and I will be their rearward.

Points of Reference:

→ The ten tribes return as a body ("even the tribes which have been lost")

→ The Father begins preparing the way whereby all the other tribes (the non-Ephraim and Manasseh tribes) may return and gain their inheritances in Old Jerusalem (Palestine area)

**3 Nephi 22**

**1** And then shall that which is written come to pass: Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child; for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.

Points of Reference:

→ The married bride (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) has children (redeemed, sanctified and celestial people)

→ The "desolate" unmarried bride (the Gentiles, scattered Israel, ten tribes, etc.) will at that day have more children than that of the married bride

Note: for a more in-depth breakdown see my *Understanding Isaiah Chapter 6,* specifically verse 13.

**3 Nephi 22**

**2** Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes;

**3** For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

**4** Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame; for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

Points of Reference:

→ Cities are made desolate

→ The people of God will extend the program from New Jerusalem outward, inhabiting the now desolate cities

→ The people of God will not be ashamed or feel guilty for inhabiting the desolate cities and the children "of the desolate unmarried bride" will not remember their reproach

**3 Nephi 22:5–10**

These verses contain no additional relevant points of reference

**3 Nephi 22**

**11** O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted! Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.

**12** And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.

**13** And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

**14** In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression for thou shalt not fear, and from terror for it shall not come near thee.

**15** Behold, they shall surely gather together against thee, not by me; whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.

**16** Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.

**17** No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall revile against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

Points of Reference:

→ New Jerusalem is established

→ The Lord will make sure that the city and the kingdom are beyond description in beauty and remove pain, death, enemies far from them. He promises them, from that point on, that no weapon formed against them will prosper. This is a fulfilment to the prophecy: in that day every people will be at war one with another save for those living in New Jerusalem; the wicked will say let us not go up unto Zion, for the inhabitants thereof are terrible (D&C 45:66–fin).

**3 Nephi 23**

**1** And now, behold, I say unto you, that ye ought to search these things. Yea, a commandment I give unto you that ye search these things diligently; for great are the words of Isaiah.

**2** For surely he spake as touching all things concerning my people which are of the house of Israel; therefore it must needs be that he must speak also to the Gentiles.

**3** And all things that he spake have been and shall be, even according to the words which he spake.

Point of Reference:

→ The words of Isaiah will be fulfilled

→ The words of Isaiah will be fulfilled again

Note: after going over all these last day points of reference, the Lord points the people (and us today) back to the words of Isaiah to confirm what he has already taught.

**3 Nephi 23**

**9** Verily I say unto you, I commanded my servant Samuel, the Lamanite, that he should testify unto this people, that at the day that the Father should glorify his name in me that there were many saints who should arise from the dead, and should appear unto many, and should minister unto them. And he said unto them: Was it not so?

**10** And his disciples answered him and said: Yea, Lord, Samuel did prophesy according to thy words, and they were all fulfilled.

**11** And Jesus said unto them: How be it that ye have not written this thing, that many saints did arise and appear unto many and did minister unto them?

Note: This is not as clear cut a point of reference, but I feel like it is an important enough one that people should think about it. Right after the Lord teaches all these points of reference, he tells us to search Isaiah, for Isaiah will confirm everything Christ just taught and fill it out. Then, the next thing Christ does is bring up the teaching of Samuel the Lamanite, knowing those teachings relate directly to what he just taught and would also greatly help people understand more fully what he is about to go over. He then commands those things to be written, so that they could go forth unto the Gentiles alongside what he just taught and is about to teach.

Points of Reference:

- → Samuel the Lamanite prophesied that "at the day that the Father should glorify his name in [Christ]," there were many Saints that would be resurrected and appear to many of the Saints and would minister unto them
- → Jesus tells them to write these things down, that they should go forth unto the Gentiles

Note: Ergo, something similar is going to happen to us, and understanding this will help us understand sections of what he just taught up to that point in time and going directly into his next teachings.

**Doctrine and Covenants 63**

**52** Wherefore, for this cause preached the apostles unto the world the resurrection of the dead.

**53** ***These things are the things that ye must look for; and, speaking after the manner of the Lord, they are now nigh at hand, and in a time to come, even in the day of the coming of the Son of Man.***

**54** And until that hour there will be foolish virgins among the wise; and at that hour cometh an entire separation of the righteous and the wicked; and in that day will I send mine angels to pluck out the wicked and cast them into unquenchable fire.

We should recognize these points of reference tied directly to what we have already gone over.

Points of Reference:

- → Apostles and Prophets preach the resurrection of the dead
- → True believers look for the resurrection of the dead as being ***the*** thing that we are to look for dealing with ***the*** marvelous work and a wonder
- → Separation of the wise and foolish virgins (i.e., "those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do" (President Nelson, 2020)), and that separation and gathering is being done by angels

**3 Nephi 24:1**

**1** And it came to pass that he commanded them that they should write the words which the Father had given unto Malachi, which he should tell unto them. And it came to pass that after they were written he expounded them. And these are the words which he did tell unto them, saying: Thus said the Father unto Malachi—Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.

Points of Reference:

- → "The messenger of the covenant" is sent before the Lord to prepare the way for him
- → The Lord appears suddenly to his temple in New Jerusalem

Note: It is not a coincidence that the Lord talks about the resurrection, pivots to Samuel the Lamanite's prophecy of Saints being resurrected, and then immediately goes into this. We learn in previous chapters, as well as by simply reading the footnotes surrounding these verses, that once again, it is Joseph Smith Jr. who is this messenger of the covenant sent to prepare the way for the Lord.

**3 Nephi 24**

**2** But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap.

**3** And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

**4** Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

Points of Reference:

- → The Lord sits as a refiner and purifier, purifying the sons of Levi (returned 10 tribes)
- → The now purified sons of Levi (with the 144,000) can now build the temple in Old Jerusalem and offer sacrifices that will be pleasing unto the Lord

**3 Nephi 24**

**7** Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts. But ye say: Wherein shall we return?

**8** Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say: Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

**9** Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

**10** Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house; and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

**11** And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the fields, saith the Lord of Hosts.

**12** And all nations shall call you blessed, for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of Hosts.

Points of Reference:

- → The Lord rebukes Israel for robbing him (priestcraft—selling themselves for nought, etc.)
- → The Lord rebukes the devourer/destroyer/etc. without money

**3 Nephi 24**

**13** Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say: What have we spoken against thee?

**14** Ye have said: It is vain to serve God, and what doth it profit that we have kept his ordinances and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts?

**15** And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.

Points of Reference:

- → A culture has fostered in which people are saying it is vain to serve God and that you don't gain profit from doing it His way
- → That culture then calls the proud happy; it rewards those that work wickedness and those that tempt God are even delivered

**3 Nephi 24**

**16** Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

**17** And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

**18** Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

Points of Reference:

→ Those that feared God began speaking to each other often; the watchmen wake up and rend the veil of unbelief (Ether 4) and "hear Him"

→ The Lord hearkened and heard them, and had a book of remembrance was written for them

→ The Lord promises that these people will be His in the day in which he makes up his jewels (i.e. When he sets up His kingdom, the New Jerusalem) and will spare them the same way that a father treats his good son

→ Joseph Smith returns and discerns between the righteous and wicked—him that serveth God and him that does not (D&C 105: 35–41)

**3 Nephi 25**

**1** For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

**2** But unto you that fear my name, shall the Son of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves in the stall.

**3** And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of Hosts.

Points of Reference:

→ The Saints of God grow up in New Jerusalem as calves in the stall

→ The Saints of God will tread down the wicked (as a lion)

→ The Lord will progressively burn the wicked leading up to the Great and Dreadful Day, where all shall burn

**3 Nephi 25**

**4** Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

Points of Reference:

→ Joseph Smith is resurrected (the same "my servant," from the previous chapter)

→ Joseph Smith is to not forget, or is to put special emphasis on, the 10 commandments when decerning (D&C 105: 35–41)

**3 Nephi 25**

**5** Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord;

**6** And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Points of Reference:

→ The Lord sends Elijah and the sealing keys of the priesthood

→ The hearts of the fathers will turn to the children and vice versa

→ This turns the hearts of the children towards the promises made to the house of Israel, i.e., "The New Jerusalem"; if this didn't happen, then the world would be utterly wasted

→ The Great and Dreadful Day

Note: This ties directly into the "angels and men being coworkers" doctrine.

**3 Nephi 26**

**1** And now it came to pass that when Jesus had told these things he expounded them unto the multitude; and he did expound all things unto them, both great and small.

**2** And he saith: These scriptures, which ye had not with you, the Father commanded that I should give unto you; for it was wisdom in him that they should be given unto future generations.

Points of Reference:

→ Jesus gives his macro last days timeline, including Malachi 3 and 4, to the ancient Nephites

→ The ancient Nephites write it down

→ Mormon puts it in the abridgment to fulfill the command that "future generations" should have it

**3 Nephi 26**

**3** And he did expound all things, even from the beginning until the time that he should come in his glory—yea, even all things which should come upon the face of the earth, even until the elements should melt with fervent heat, and the earth should be wrapt together as a scroll, and the heavens and the earth should pass away;

Points of Reference:

→ The Great and Dreadful Day

→ Elements should melt with a fervent heat, the earth gets wrapt together like a scroll, heavens and earth pass away

**3 Nephi 26**

**4** And even unto the great and last day, when all people, and all kindreds, and all nations and tongues shall stand before God, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil—

**5** If they be good, to the resurrection of everlasting life; and if they be evil, to the resurrection of damnation; being on a parallel, the one on the one hand and the other on the other hand, according to the mercy, and the justice, and the holiness which is in Christ, who was before the world began.

Points of Reference:

→ Great and last day (not the same of the Great and Dreadful Day)

→ The great judgement

**3 Nephi 26**

**8** And these things have I written, which are a lesser part of the things which he taught the people; and I have written them to the intent that they may be brought again unto this people, from the Gentiles, according to the words which Jesus hath spoken.

**9** And when they shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things then shall the greater things be made manifest unto them.

**10** And if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation.

**11** Behold, I was about to write them, all which were engraven upon the plates of Nephi, but the Lord forbade it, saying: I will try the faith of my people.

**12** Therefore I, Mormon, do write the things which have been commanded me of the Lord. And now I, Mormon, make an end of my sayings, and proceed to write the things which have been commanded me.

Points of Reference:

→ Mormon does the abridgement and confirms that the "future generations" does in fact refer to us today

→ The Gentiles receive it

→ The Lamanites receive it

→ The Lord tries the faith of his people

→ If the Lord's people believe "these things," greater things will be made manifest unto them (Ether 4, the sealed portion) vs. if they don't believe, the greater things will be withheld (i.e., Imagine what your life would be like if the knowledge gained from the Book of Mormon were suddenly taken away—2 Nephi 28)

## Jesus Christ's Macro Last Day Timeline

1. The Nephites write what the Lord commanded them to write →
2. The apostles in Old Jerusalem never ask; therefore, they never receive the knowledge from Holy Ghost, and thus don't write it down regarding the people in ancient America →
3. The house of Israel will suffer from unbelief, but the children of the covenant are blessed →
4. The Nephites will dwindle in unbelief because of iniquity →
5. The Father blesses the Gentiles with many mercies, by Ephraim mingling with the seed of the kingdoms of the earth →
6. The Holy Ghost, or intelligence of God, leavens the loaf of the gentile nations →
7. The Gentiles become mighty above all because of this and the Gentiles come to the land of promise (America) and are set up as a free people →
8. The Gentiles scatter the remnants of the house of Israel (i.e., Native Americans) →
9. The Gentiles cast the remnants of the house of Israel (Native American Indians) out from among them; they trod them under their feet, smite them, afflict them, slay them, hate them, and turn them into a hiss and a byword →
10. The truth and fullness goes to the Gentiles →
11. The fullness of the Gentiles is ushered in and with it the Book of Mormon. The Lord sends Elijah and the sealing keys of the Priesthood →
12. Joseph Smith is martyred/marred →
13. The Lord then begins to gather in scattered Israel through the fullness of the Gentiles and the Book of Mormon. Many Gentiles are converted, baptized and are numbered among the house of Israel →
14. The Gentiles become lifted up in their pride above all other nations and are filled with lying, priestcraft, wickedness →
15. The Lamanites begin to know the Book of Mormon and to blossom as a rose which is the sign to know that the gathering of Israel and the establishment of New Jerusalem is nigh at hand. →
16. The Gentiles become the scourge (i.e., the destroyer, the Assyrian, etc.) in America; a culture has fostered that says it is vain to serve God and that you don't gain profit from doing it; that culture then calls the proud happy, it rewards those that work wickedness, and those that tempt God are even delivered (priestcraft cabals) →
17. The Lord's people will have their faith tried. Those that feared God begin speaking to each other often. The Lord hearkens and hears them and has a book of remembrance written for them. The Lord promises that these people will be His in the day in which he makes up his jewels (i.e., when he sets up His kingdom in New Jerusalem) and will spare them the same way that a father treats his good son →
18. Joseph Smith is healed (resurrected) and discerns between the righteous and wicked, him that serveth God and him that does not. Joseph Smith is to not forget, or is to put special emphasis on the ten commandments when discerning →
19. Joseph Smith works prudently →
20. The Lord brings in the fullness of the gospel (sealed portion, celestial law, etc.). If the Lord's people didn't take the time to gain a testimony of the "lesser things," they will not be able to accept these "greater things" and will have the light that they have received taken from them (i.e., 2 Nephi 28, i.e., Imagine what your life would be like if the knowledge gained from the Book of Mormon were suddenly taken away, etc.) →
21. There is a rebuke to the Gentiles/members of the Church for robbing the Lord. The reference for 3 Nephi 24 verse 11 takes you to D&C 85, "inheritances in Zion are to be received through consecrations" →
22. If the Gentiles reject the fullness, then the Lord will remove the fullness from them. Ephraim and Manasseh are the watchmen who will lift up their voice together →
23. Joseph Smith with the remnant/Joseph's Boys/etc. redeem Jackson County Missouri. The meetings at Adam-ondi-Ahman begin at this time →
24. Ephraim and Manasseh begin to be given their permanent inheritances in Zion at this time
25. Joseph Smith calls the 10 tribes home →
26. The 10 tribes return and are given the fullness of the gospel and receive their crown of glory from Ephraim (i.e., the fullness of the gospel). They will come singing songs, and they will do so, made only possible by the Lord making bare his holy arm in front of all nations. This is the marvelous work and a wonder, which will be spearheaded by Joseph Smith, who shall be exalted, extoled and be very high, sprinkling the nations, shutting the mouths of kings. The number of these new bodies of converts will dwarf the worthy members of the Church (married bride vs. unmarried bride) →
27. All the house of Israel will see eye to eye and will sing together in the heights of Zion →
28. New Jerusalem is being built/established as people are being gathered in unto it. The Lord will make sure that the city and the kingdom are beyond description in beauty and remove pain, death, enemies far from them. He promises them, from that point on, that no weapon formed against them will prosper. This is a fulfilment to the prophecy: in that day every people will be at war one with another save for those living in New Jerusalem. The wicked will say let us not go up unto Zion for the inhabitants thereof are terrible (D&C 45:66–fin). The Saints of God grow up in New Jerusalem as calves in the stall →
29. Christ appears in the midst of New Jerusalem/"the Lord appeared suddenly to His temple" (Revelation 7) →
30. The Lord sits as a refiner and purifier, purifying the sons of Levi (returned 10 tribes) →
31. If Gentile nations repent, they will be numbered with God's people, to be gathered in as a man gathereth sheaves into the floor in unto New Jerusalem. If they don't repent, they will be destroyed by God's people (1 Nephi 14:7) (House of Israel, who will be among them and destroying them). →
32. The unrepentant, wicked, Gentile cities will be made desolate →
33. The people of God will extend the program from New Jerusalem outward, inhabiting the now desolate cities →
34. The people of God will not be ashamed or feel guilty for inhabiting the desolate cities →
35. Three worldwide gatherings take place at this time: (1) the worldwide gathering of the elect to Zion, (2) the Jews to Old Jerusalem, and (3) the wicked to be destroyed →

36. The Lord will consecrate the gains of the House of Israel unto himself and will make the house of Israel's horns like iron and hoofs like brass. →
37. The now purified sons of Levi (with the 144,000) can now build the temple in Old Jerusalem and offer sacrifices that will be pleasing unto the Lord →
38. Jesus restores house of Israel to the land of Palestine (Old Jerusalem) →
39. The watchmen of New Jerusalem (i.e., Mount Zion) and Old Jerusalem (i.e., Jerusalem) will then see eye to eye. There will be two world capitals with the law going forth from Mount Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. →
40. Old Jerusalem is rebuilt, awakes, and arises again to its former glory →
41. *Missionary work will commence among the heathen nations. The heathen nations will be presented with the same choice that the Gentile nations were presented with. Joseph Smith taught that during the time period between the events at Old Jerusalem and the Great and Dreadful Day, the Lord will be calling the inhabitants of the earth to come to him and those nations that do not will be visited with famine, natural disasters etc. until they are eventually all destroyed (TPJS, p.268) →
42. The Great and Dreadful Day. Elements will melt with a fervent heat, the earth gets wrapped together like a scroll, heavens and earth pass away →
43. The Great and Last Day and judgement

# SECTION IV

# Understanding Isaiah

*"[Isaiah] spake concerning the restoration of... the house of Israel; and after they were restored they should no more be confounded, neither should they be scattered again. ... Hear ye the words of the prophet [Isaiah], ye who are a remnant of the house of Israel... and liken them unto yourselves, that ye may have hope... and give ear unto my words; for because the words of Isaiah are not plain unto you, nevertheless they are plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy."*

*—Nephi (1 Nephi 15:20, 19:24; 2 Nephi 25:4)*

*"Behold [the words of Isaiah] are written, ye have them before you, therefore search them—"*

*—Jesus Christ (3 Nephi 20:11)*

*"Search the prophecies of Isaiah. Behold, I cannot write them. Yea, behold I say unto you, that those saints who have gone before me, who have possessed this land, shall cry, yea, even from the dust will they cry unto the Lord; and as the Lord liveth he will remember the covenant which he hath made with them."*

*—Moroni (Mormon 8:23)*

# Isaiah Introduction, Chapter 1

## Understanding Isaiah Introduction

### The Importance of Isaiah

**(15-1) Introduction**

Isaiah was not only a prophet but also a seer. "A seer," said Ammon, "is greater than a prophet," for a "seer is a revelator and a prophet also" (Mosiah 8:15–16). Ammon continued: "A seer can know of things which are past, and also of things which are to come, and by them shall all things be revealed, or, rather, shall secret things be made manifest, and hidden things shall come to light" (Mosiah 8:17).

Isaiah was one of the mightiest seers of all time. Undoubtedly he was one of those the Prophet Joseph Smith had in mind when he said: "Search the revelations of God; study the prophecies, and rejoice that God grants unto the world Seers and Prophets. They are they who saw the mysteries of godliness; they saw the flood before it came; they saw angels ascending and descending upon a ladder that reached from earth to heaven; they saw the stone cut out of the mountain, which filled the whole earth; they saw the son of God come from the regions of bliss and dwell with men on earth; they saw the deliverer come out of Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob; they saw the glory of the Lord when he showed the transfiguration of the earth on the mount; they saw every mountain laid low and every valley exalted when the Lord was taking vengeance upon the wicked; they saw truth spring out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven in the last days, before the Lord came the second time to gather his elect; they saw the end of wickedness on earth, and the Sabbath of creation crowned with peace; they saw the end of the glorious thousand years, when Satan was loosed for a little season; they saw the day of judgment when all men received according to their works, and they saw the heaven and the earth flee away to make room for the city of God, when the righteous receive an inheritance in eternity. And, fellow sojourners upon earth, it is your privilege to purify yourselves and come up to the same glory, and see for yourselves, and know yourselves." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 12–13.)

A clear and dramatic shift in emphasis takes place in Isaiah 24. There, Isaiah's seership becomes profoundly evident as he looks forward in time to the final dispensation.

When you consider the scope of Isaiah's vision and its application for all generations of men, it is not surprising that Jesus Himself said, "Great are the words of Isaiah" and commanded that we should "search these things diligently" (3 Nephi 23:1).

Did you notice Joseph Smith's final statement in the quotation above? He said, "It is your privilege to … see for yourselves, and know for yourselves" all the things the seers have seen. One way to do that is by carefully studying the writings of the seers. Strive to see what Isaiah saw as you study this very significant part of his words.

("Prophecies of the Dispensation of the fullness of Times," *Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* [Third ed., 2003], p. 161)

**3 Nephi 23**

**1** And now, behold, I say unto you, that ye ought to search these things. Yea, a commandment I give unto you that ye search these things diligently; for great are the words of Isaiah.

**2** For surely he spake as touching all things concerning my people which are of the house of Israel; therefore it must needs be that he must speak also to the Gentiles.

**3** And all things that he spake have been and shall be, even according to the words which he spake.

**2 Nephi 6**

**4** And now, behold, I would speak unto you concerning things which are, and which are to come; wherefore, I will read you the words of Isaiah. And they are the words which my brother has desired that I should speak unto you. And I speak unto you for your sakes, that ye may learn and glorify the name of your God.

**5** And now, the words which I shall read are they which Isaiah spake concerning all the house of Israel; wherefore, they may be likened unto you, for ye are of the house of Israel. And there are many things which have been spoken by Isaiah which may be likened unto you, because ye are of the house of Israel.

**3 Nephi 20**

**10** And it came to pass that when they had all given glory unto Jesus, he said unto them: Behold now I finish the commandment which the Father hath commanded me concerning this people, who are a remnant of the house of Israel.

**11** Ye remember that I spake unto you, and said that when the words of Isaiah should be fulfilled—behold they are written, ye have them before you, therefore search them—

**12** And verily, verily, I say unto you, that when they shall be fulfilled then is the fulfilling of the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people, O house of Israel.

**13** And then shall the remnants, which shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, be gathered in from the east and from the west, and from the south and from the north; and they shall be brought to the knowledge of the Lord their God, who hath redeemed them.

**14** And the Father hath commanded me that I should give unto you this land, for your inheritance.

**(E-1) The Importance of Isaiah's Writings**

Isaiah's name means "Jehovah saves" or "the Lord is salvation." His life and teachings proclaim the message of Christ and the way of salvation Christ provided. John wrote that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Revelation 19:10). Using that statement as a criterion to evaluate, we must classify Isaiah among the greatest of the prophets, because he powerfully and eloquently testified of Christ and His work.

The Savior Himself affirmed the importance of Isaiah's writings when, in His visit to the Nephites, He commanded them to search diligently the words of Isaiah (see 3 Nephi 20:11). The Lord said, "Great are the words of Isaiah. For surely he spake as touching all things concerning my people which are of the house of Israel" (3 Nephi 23:1–2). The words Jacob spoke to his people can also be applied to us. Jacob said, "There are many things which have been spoken by Isaiah which may be likened unto you, because ye are of the house of Israel" (2 Nephi 6:5). We also are of the house of Israel.

The writings of Isaiah are quoted extensively in other scripture. In fact, Isaiah is quoted in other scriptures more often than any other prophet. There are sixty-six chapters in the book of Isaiah, making a total of 1,292 verses. The prophets in the Book of Mormon quoted 414 of those verses (32 percent of the book of Isaiah). They paraphrased at least another 34 verses (3 percent). The Nephite prophets considered Isaiah's writings to be of such great worth that they put approximately 35 percent of the book of Isaiah in the valuable space they had on the plates. The writers of the New Testament had a similar respect for Isaiah's teachings and prophecies. In the New Testament, Isaiah is quoted at least fifty-seven times.

In latter-day revelation there is a similar emphasis on the words of Isaiah. The Doctrine and Covenants makes approximately one hundred references to Isaiah's writings by quoting, paraphrasing, or interpreting his teachings. The close connection between Isaiah's words and those of the Doctrine and Covenants is apparent in Doctrine and Covenants 113, which contains inspired interpretations of chapters 11 and 52 of Isaiah. The key to understanding Isaiah 65 is in Doctrine and Covenants 101; Doctrine and Covenants 133 opens up an understanding of Isaiah 35, 51, 63, and 64. Numerous examples of Isaiah's phraseology can be found in the Doctrine and Covenants; compare Doctrine and Covenants 133:3, 15, 27, 40–53, 67–70 with Isaiah 52:10, 12; 51:10; 64:1–4; 63:1–9; 50:2–3, 11.

The prophet Nephi said that Isaiah spoke many things that were hard for his people to understand (see 2 Nephi 25:1). The same is true of people today. Even among the Saints who have the gift of the Holy Ghost there are many who understand very little of what Isaiah taught. Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote:

"If, as many suppose, Isaiah ranks with the most difficult of the prophets to understand, his words are also among the most important for us to know and ponder. …

"… His prophetic words can and should shine brightly in the heart of every member of the Church." ("Ten Keys to Understanding Isaiah," *Ensign,* Oct. 1973, p. 80.)

Nephi studied, expounded upon, and loved the writings of Isaiah (see 2 Nephi 11:8; 12–24; 25:1–5). Concerning our need to understand Isaiah as Nephi did, Elder McConkie said: "It just may be that my salvation (and yours also!) does in fact depend upon our ability to understand the writings of Isaiah as fully and truly as Nephi understood them" ("Ten Keys to Understanding Isaiah," p. 78).

Elder McConkie explained that if we desire to go where Isaiah and Nephi have gone, then we must believe, think, know, teach, and live as they did. Certainly the writings of Isaiah deserve our careful and prayerful study. They can be understood by those who sincerely desire to do so.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* [Third ed., 2003], p. 131)

## Interpretation and Understanding of Isaiah

**2 Nephi 25**

**1** Now I, Nephi, do speak somewhat concerning the words which I have written, which have been spoken by the mouth of Isaiah. For behold, Isaiah spake many things which were hard for many of my people to understand; for they know not concerning the manner of prophesying among the Jews.

**2** For I, Nephi, have not taught them many things concerning the manner of the Jews; for their works were works of darkness, and their doings were doings of abominations.

**3** Wherefore, I write unto my people, unto all those that shall receive hereafter these things which I write, that they may know the judgments of God, that they come upon all nations, according to the word which he hath spoken.

**4** Wherefore, hearken, O my people, which are of the house of Israel, and give ear unto my words; for because the words of Isaiah are not plain unto you, nevertheless they are plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy. But I give unto you a prophecy, according to the spirit which is in me; wherefore I shall prophesy according to the plainness which hath been with me from the time that I came out from Jerusalem with my father; for behold, my soul delighteth in plainness unto my people, that they may learn.

**5** Yea, and my soul delighteth in the words of Isaiah, for I came out from Jerusalem, and mine eyes hath beheld the things of the Jews, and I know that the Jews do understand the things of the prophets, and there is none other people that understand the things which were spoken unto the Jews like unto them, save it be that they are taught after the manner of the things of the Jews.

**6** But behold, I, Nephi, have not taught my children after the manner of the Jews; but behold, I, of myself, have dwelt at Jerusalem, wherefore I know concerning the regions round about; and I have made mention unto my children concerning the judgments of God, which hath come to pass among the Jews, unto my children, according to all that which Isaiah hath spoken, and I do not write them.

**7** But behold, I proceed with mine own prophecy, according to my plainness; in the which I know that no man can err; nevertheless, in the days that the prophecies of Isaiah shall be fulfilled men shall know of a surety, at the times when they shall come to pass.

**8** Wherefore, they are of worth unto the children of men, and he that supposeth that they are not, unto them will I speak particularly, and confine the words unto mine own people; for I know that they shall be of great worth unto them in the last days; for in that day shall they understand them; wherefore, for their good have I written them.

**9** And as one generation hath been destroyed among the Jews because of iniquity, even so have they been destroyed from generation to generation according to their iniquities; and never hath any of them been destroyed save it were foretold them by the prophets of the Lord.

**(E-3) Pay the Price in Study and Effort**

Isaiah's writings could properly be called an advanced level of scripture. He seldom explained his doctrine but assumed that the reader already had a knowledge of the gospel and the Lord's plan of salvation. Isaiah's book is written in a poetic, literary style that makes extensive use of symbolism to communicate to those who are spiritually mature.

Isaiah's words are similar to the parables of Jesus in their manner of teaching. When Jesus' disciples asked Him why He taught in parables, He said: "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them [the people in general] it is not given. … Therefore I speak to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. … For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart. … But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." (Matthew 13:11, 13, 15–16.)

Many of the people of Jesus' time were spiritually immature and unprepared to receive the doctrines He taught. Through parables He was able to teach the more spiritually mature and at the same time veil His teachings from those who were not prepared to understand or follow them. In that manner He kept many from being condemned for having a knowledge of principles they were unable to live (see Alma 12:9–11; Jacob 4:14). A similar charge in teaching was given to Isaiah (see Isaiah 6:9–10). For this reason, Isaiah also veiled his teachings in language that preserved his teachings for those who would understand with their heart. Spiritually speaking, Isaiah's writings are meat, not milk (see 1 Corinthians 3:1–3; Hebrews 5:13–14; Isaiah 28:9). It requires spiritual maturity to understand them.

When the Lord commanded the Nephites to study Isaiah's words, He told them how to study those words. He said, *"Search* these things *diligently"* (3 Nephi 23:1; emphasis added). It is not sufficient to merely read Isaiah's writings. To come to an understanding of the book of Isaiah, one must diligently study and search by prayerfully pondering Isaiah's teachings, analyzing them, and relating them to other scriptures. Individual phrases and verses must be studied carefully in the broad context of the gospel and the prophecies of the latter days.

("Enrichment E: Understnding Isaiah," *Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* [Third edition, 2003], pp. 131–132)

**(E-4) Have the "Spirit of Prophecy"**

Nephi taught that the words of Isaiah "are plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy" (2 Nephi 25:4). The "testimony of Jesus [which comes by the power of the Holy Ghost] is the spirit of prophecy" (Revelation 19:10). The spirit of prophecy, however, is far more than just a belief that Jesus lives. It includes an understanding that Jesus is the literal Son of God. It includes a correct knowledge of His purpose in coming into mortality and of the significance and nature of His mission. It includes an understanding of the gospel plan for His children, particularly those who spiritually become His sons and daughters through the covenant of baptism. All of this comes through the power of the Holy Ghost. The prophet Isaiah wrote under the influence of the spirit of prophecy. His writings must be interpreted under the influence of that same spirit. Those who desire to understand Isaiah should learn of Christ and seek the companionship of the Holy Ghost.

Peter made it clear that since prophets deliver their message through inspiration from the Holy Ghost, a correct understanding of their message must come from the same source (see 2 Peter 1:20–21; D&C 50:17–22). The Book of Mormon teaches the way to obtain the spirit of prophecy. Righteous people who are serving the Lord and seeking to do His will can obtain the spirit of prophecy by searching the scriptures diligently and giving themselves "to much prayer, and fasting" (Alma 17:3). The Lord will give knowledge to those who prepare themselves and sincerely seek it.

The Prophet Joseph Smith once said, "God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what He will make known unto the Twelve, and even the least Saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 149). This truth, of course, also applies to gaining an understanding of the writings of Isaiah.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* [Third ed., 2003], p. 132)

**(E-5) Understand the Manner of Prophesying of the Jews**

One reason the prophet Nephi gave for his people being unable to understand the writings of Isaiah was that they "[knew] not concerning the manner of prophesying among the Jews" (2 Nephi 25:1). This manner of prophesying includes several elements.

*Imagery and figurative language.* Isaiah used in his writing images and figures of speech that were well understood by the Hebrew people. For those with other backgrounds, understanding the Hebrew manner of writing is often difficult. Isaiah did not intend for every word he used to be interpreted in its most literal sense. He made constant use of metaphors, similes, analogies, parables, types, and shadows. The following are some examples:

[For example,] in Isaiah 1:1the prophet said that he was speaking about Judah and Jerusalem, yet in Isaiah 1:10 he said, "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; … ye people of Gomorrah." He could not literally be speaking to Sodom and Gomorrah, for they were destroyed in the time of Abraham because of their wickedness (see Genesis 19:24–25). Isaiah used the names *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* to tell Judah even more forcefully that they were very wicked and were close to being destroyed, just as Sodom and Gomorrah had been.

*Dualism and esoteric terms.* As is often the case in prophetic declarations, some of Isaiah's writings have a dual meaning. That is, they can apply to more than one situation or may be fulfilled at more than one time. He also at times combined dualistic phrases with terms that were intended for or understood by only a certain group. Such *esoteric language* brings to mind religious concepts that only those who have the proper religious background readily understand without further explanation. For example, refers to the "mountain of the Lord's house" being "established in the top of the mountains." President Harold B. Lee said that the phrase "mountain of the Lord's house" referred to both "a place as well as a definition of a righteous people" ("The Way to Eternal Life," *Ensign,* Nov. 1971, p. 15). The establishment of the "mountain of the Lord's house in the top of the mountains" has been fulfilled by the coming of the pioneers to establish the Church and temple in the tops of the mountains in Utah (see Lee, "The Way to Eternal Life," p. 15) and will be further fulfilled [in future events]. It applies generally to those places where God's power and authority reside and where He communicates with His people. The phrase "all nations shall flow unto it" (Isaiah 2:2) can refer both to the early gathering of the Saints to the valleys of the mountains in Utah and also to the general gathering of Saints to Zion. The term *Zion* (v. 3), as well, has several applications. It refers to the New Jerusalem in America, the Jerusalem of Judah, and also the Lord's people or their places of gathering in all parts of the world. By using such terms as these, Isaiah conveys profound spiritual meaning to those who understand the special significance of his language.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters, Isaiah wrote of the gathering of Israel and their eventual triumph over Babylon. This figure is an excellent example of dualism. *Babylon* is used to refer both to the nation of Babylon as it existed at the time of Isaiah and also to the wickedness of the world and the dominions of Satan in the world, which the nation of Babylon epitomized. In his writings about Babylon in these chapters, Isaiah used concepts that applied to the future fall of Babylon (as a nation and as the symbol of the world), to the triumph of Israel, and to the pre-mortal overthrow of Lucifer and his hosts (see Isaiah 14:4–23). His words are not only dualistic but esoteric as well, for only those who understand the Lord's plan of salvation can grasp the full message Isaiah presented. Many of Isaiah's chapters are dualistic in the sense that the message fulfilled in Isaiah's time is a type or shadow of events to take place in the last days.

This richness of language and meaning seems to be what Nephi meant when he spoke of the manner of prophesying among the Jews. There is frequent reference to the law of Moses and extensive use of imagery, figurative language, and phrases that have dualistic and esoteric meanings. Though modern readers cannot fully grasp the culture and times of ancient Israel, understanding the methods Isaiah used to convey his meaning can give the reader a far greater understanding of Isaiah.

("Enrichment E: Understnding Isaiah," *Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* [Third edition, 2003], pp. 132–133)

**(E-7) Learn of the Judgments of God and the Fulfillment of His Prophecies**

The Lord is consistent in His dealings with His children in all ages of the world. "God doth not walk in crooked paths, neither doth he turn to the right hand nor to the left, neither doth he vary from that which he hath said, therefore his paths are straight, and his course is one eternal round" (D&C 3:2). This consistency is of the greatest importance to His children as they seek to work out their salvation. It is also very helpful to them in seeking to understand and follow the counsel He gives through His prophets. To understand Isaiah's writings, one should know of the Lord's teachings and workings given through other prophets. Blessings and cursings came to the people of Isaiah's time according to the same principles that have been set down in any age of the world. As one learns of the patterns of actions that cause people to withdraw from God and of the actions that bring down the Lord's wrath upon them, the warnings and pronouncements of Isaiah can be better understood. That which was condemned by Isaiah is treated similarly by the Lord in all ages. The Lord's message in all dispensations is that there are laws upon which all consequences are based. To know the Lord's laws provides a framework from which to interpret the writings of Isaiah or any other prophet.

The Lord has revealed to many prophets the grand panorama of the earth's history. By learning of what they have written, it is possible to see where Isaiah's writings fit into the Lord's overall plan. For example, a greater understanding of Isaiah's writings can be gained by looking at them in the light of the allegory of Zenos about the olive trees (see Jacob 5). In the allegory a delineation of the history and destiny of the house of Israel is given. With a knowledge of the scatterings, nurturings, gatherings, and ultimate destiny of Israel, as taught by Zenos and cited by

Jacob, Isaiah's writings can be viewed from the proper prospective. Frequently the prophecies of one prophet help one to properly view the prophecies and writings of another. Nephi prophesied that "in the days that the prophecies of Isaiah shall be fulfilled men shall know of a surety, at the times when they shall come to pass … for … they shall be of great worth unto them in the last days; for in that day shall they understand them" (2 Nephi 25:7–8). One can look for the fulfillment of many of Isaiah's words in the events that are transpiring in this dispensation. Nephi knew that those who saw Isaiah's prophecies come to pass could understand them (see, for example, Isaiah 29).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* [Third ed., 2003], p. 134)

**(E-9) Use the Book of Mormon**

"The Book of Mormon is the world's greatest commentary on the book of Isaiah" (McConkie, "Ten Keys to Understanding Isaiah," p. 81). The Book of Mormon prophets loved the writings of Isaiah and quoted from them often. Large blocks of material are found in the Book of Mormon with inspired commentary and explanations. The Book of Mormon prophets obtained this material from the brass plates, which were written before 600 B.C. The Isaiah material in the Book of Mormon is, therefore, the oldest and most accurate available and provides commentary by prophets who, in some cases, had the same historical and cultural background as Isaiah had. The Lord Himself swore to the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon and, thus, to the truthfulness of Isaiah's writings that are found therein (see D&C 17:6).

("Enrichment E: Understnding Isaiah," *Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* [Third edition, 2003], pp. 134–135)

The Spirit of Prophecy, The Book of Mormon, and understanding the macro last-day timeline are the "big three" as far as understanding Isaiah. The rest are all secondary, and frankly will only add bells and whistles—history lessons and cool, "man you sound smart!" soundbites—but don't actually add any additional intelligence, points of reference, etc.

**Helaman 4**

**23** And because of their iniquity the church had begun to dwindle; and they began to disbelieve in the spirit of prophecy and in the spirit of revelation; and the judgments of God did stare them in the face.

**Doctrine and Covenants 11**

**25** Deny not the spirit of revelation, nor the spirit of prophecy, for wo unto him that denieth these things

**Joseph Smith Jr.** (Steamboat Dream)

In early February 1844, four months prior to his death, Joseph Smith had a dream, which he related to Wilford Woodruff, Willard Richards, and W. W. Phelps. He stated, "I was standing on a peninsula, in the midst of a vast body of water where there appeared to be a large harbor or pier built out for boats to come to. I was surrounded by my friends, and while looking at this harbor I saw a steamboat approaching the harbor. There were bridges on the pier for persons to cross, and there came up a wind and drove the steamboat under one of the bridges and upset it. I ran up to the boat, expecting the persons would all drown; and wishing to do something to assist them, I put my hand against the side of the boat, and with one surge I shoved it under the bridge and righted it up, and then told them to take care of themselves. But it was not long before I saw them starting out into the channel or main body of the water again. The storms were raging and the waters rough. ***I said to my friends that if they did not understand the signs of the times and the spirit of prophecy, they would be apt to be lost.*** It was but a few moments after when we saw the waves break over the boat, and she soon foundered and went down with all on board."

(*History of the Church,* 6:194–95)

**George A. Smith**

Now, it is not certain that the Prophet always reveals those secrets unto the people. It may happen in many instances, that the Lord will reveal unto his servants the Prophets many things that are to come, and yet leave those who are not enlightened by the Spirit of Prophecy to wait until those things transpire before they are apprised of them.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 10, p. 66)

**Elder Dallin H. Oaks**

The book of Isaiah contains numerous prophecies that seem to have multiple fulfillments. … The fact that many of these prophecies can have multiple meanings underscores the importance of our seeking revelation from the Holy Ghost to help us interpret them. As Nephi says, the words of Isaiah "are plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy" (2 Ne. 25:4).

("Scripture Reading and Revelation," *Ensign,* January 1995)

**Elder Orson Pratt**

"Others have their eyes closed upon the prophecies of the ancient Prophets; and not only that, but they are void of the spirit of prophecy themselves. When a man has this, though he may appeal to ancient Prophets to get understanding on some subjects he does not clearly understand, yet, as he has the spirit of prophecy in himself, he will not be in darkness; he will have a knowledge of the signs of the times; he will have a knowledge of the house of Israel, and of Zion, of the ten tribes, and of many things and purposes and events that are to take place on the earth; and he will see coming events, and can say such an event will take place, and after that another, and then another; and after that the trumpet shall sound, and after that certain things will take place, and then another trump shall sound, &c., &c.; and he will have his eye fixed on the signs of the times, and that day will not overtake him unawares; but upon the nations it will come as a thief…"

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 7, Discourse 29, pp. 189–190)

**Elder Orson Pratt**

The day is at hand, the morning has broken, the sun of the Gospel has arisen in the eastern horizon, and is beginning to shine with a degree of splendor. The time is near—how near, no man knoweth: the day and the hour when the Son of Man shall come is a secret. In a revelation given to this Church, it is said that no man shall know until he comes; therefore we cannot expect to know the day nor the hour; but we know it is near at hand, and what a consolation it is. There may be men that will know within a year—that will have revelation to say within one or two years when the Lord shall appear. I do not know that there is anything against this.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 8, Discourse 10, pp. 44–52)

If we have the Spirit of Revelation, obtained as a gift through the Holy Ghost by obedience and diligence in studying God's word, then the macro last-day timeline will become clearer and clearer. With a view of these events and an understanding of the scriptures, when we read Isaiah, we will be equipped with all the tools we need to be able to place what we are reading into the proper context—between the right points of reference, etc.—and thus we will be able to understand clearly the words of Isaiah.

## Isaiah Chapter One

**Isaiah 1**

*The people of Israel are apostate, rebellious, and corrupt; only a few remain faithful—The people's sacrifices and feasts are rejected—They are called*

*upon to repent and work righteousness—Zion will be redeemed in the day of restoration.*

**1** The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

**2** Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

**3** The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

**4** Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto danger, they are gone away backward.

**5** Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

**6** From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.

**7** Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.

**(13-2) Isaiah 1:1. "The Vision of Isaiah"**

> Great prophetic insight to the problems of the world in which he lived and into the challenges of the future came about through the revelation ("vision") the prophet Isaiah received.
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* [Third ed., 2003], p. 137)

**(13-3) Isaiah 1:1–9. Rebellion against the Lord**

> "Israel's rebellion is evidence of the highest degree of sin" (Sidney B. Sperry, *The Spirit of the Old Testament,* p. 175). Jehovah had nourished and brought them up as children (in Egypt and the wilderness), and now in their adulthood (in the promised land) they had turned against the Lord. Their affliction is like wounds or sores that have not healed. The totality of their rebellion is illustrated by the references to head and heart, to the whole person from foot to head. In other words, the spiritual cancer had infested the whole body of Israel. ***Little spiritual health was left*** in the nation. That was why the land would be left utterly desolate.
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* [Third ed., 2003], p. 137)

With dualism, we understand that Isaiah spoke of Old Jerusalem/Judah/Israel (history lesson) as well as the New Jerusalem/Ephraim/America (prophecy). For the remainder of Understanding Isaiah, this knowledge will be assumed, and we will focus on the "prophecy," for that is what is most important. With that in mind, Israel can refer to either America or The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, depending on context; sometimes it can even be talking about both. Did the Lord nourish and bring up the United States of America in the wilderness (unknown, hostile environment)? Yes. Did the Lord do the same thing with the early church in America? Yes. Here is a case where both clearly apply, both being history lessons. The warning, or "prophecy," here is that once the United States of America and the Church reach adulthood in the promised land, they will turn against the Lord. This is a pattern repeated many times in the Book of Mormon (known as "the pride cycle" by many) with the Jaredite nation, as well as the Nephite nation.

**Brigham Young**

> There is one principle I would like to have the Latter-day Saints perfectly understand—that is, of blessings and cursings. For instance, we read that war, pestilence, plagues, famine, etc., will be visited upon the inhabitants of the earth; but if distress through the judgments of God comes upon this people, it will be because the majority have turned away from the Lord. Let the majority of the people turn away from the Holy Commandments which the Lord has delivered to us, and cease to hold the balance of power in the Church, and we may expect the judgments of God to come upon us; but while six-tenths or three-fourths of this people will keep the commandments of God, the curse and judgments of the Almighty will never come upon them, though we will have trials of various kinds, and the elements to contend with—natural and spiritual elements. While this people will strive to serve God according to the best of their abilities, they will fare better, have more to eat and to wear, have better houses to live in, better associations, and enjoy themselves better than the wicked ever do or ever will do.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 10, p. 335, June 26, 1864)

**President Brigham Young**

> "And when the spirit of persecution, the spirit of hatred, of wrath, and malice ceases in the world against this people, it will be the time that this people have apostatized and joined hands with the wicked…"
>
> (*Discourses of Brigham Young,* p. 112)

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

> How Zion May Escape the Lord's Scourge.
>
> Nevertheless, Zion shall escape if she observe to do all things whatsoever I have commanded her. But if she observe not to do whatsoever I have commanded her, I will visit her according to all her works, with sore affliction, with pestilence, with plague, with sword, with vengeance, with devouring fire."
>
> This way of escape, insuring the protection of the Lord, is a very simple one. Unfortunately,
>
> many of the people of Zion have refused to take advantage of this promise. As I observe
>
> conditions among the people I cannot see how we are going to escape when the judgments are to pass over the nations, which are promised in this revelation and in others which I cannot take time to read. Because of our disobedience and our failure to keep the commandments of the Lord, the righteous, as in times past, may be called upon to suffer with the unrighteous among us.
>
> (*Doctrines of Salvation,* Volume 3, pp. 31–32)

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

> Rebellion Against God: A Sign of the Times.
>
> In this land, as well as in other lands, men have forgotten God. They are not worshipping him with all their might, mind, and strength. They are not worshiping him at all. I am speaking now of the general run of mankind. Instead of keeping his commandments they are violating them…This rebellion against God—for that is what it is—is not confined to those who do not profess religion or even to belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, for the evil has crept within the borders of the Church itself, and there are many who call themselves Latter-day Saints who are guilty of these offenses.
>
> (*Doctrines of Salvation,* Volume 3, p. 25)

**President John Taylor**

> By and by we find the people departing from the principles of truth, from the laws of the Gospel, repudiating the fear of God, grieving his Holy Spirit ***and incurring his displeasure.***
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 17, p. 33)

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

> **47** And while they were yet laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves: And what need hath my lord of this tower?

**48** And consulted for a long time, saying among themselves: What need hath my lord of this tower, seeing this is a time of peace?

**49** Might not this money be given to the exchangers? For there is no need of these things.

**50** And while they were at variance one with another they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord.

**51** And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive trees.

This is the Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees, which we have already covered in a previous section. Now that one has a correct understanding of that parable, is it not now easy to see what Isaiah is teaching here? What points of reference? Where we are in the macro last-day timeline? Israel became slothful, neglected Zion, the New Jerusalem, and decided a "better use of money," and because of that the destroyer came and made the land desolate—exactly what Isaiah is preaching/prophesying. Obviously, understanding Zenos' Olive Tree Allegory, one can correctly place these events as well—directly before the servant is sent and "the few" are gathered.

**Jacob 5**

**48** And it came to pass that ***the servant*** said unto his master: Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard—have not the branches thereof overcome the roots which are good? And because the branches have overcome the roots thereof, behold they grew faster than the strength of the roots, taking strength unto themselves. Behold, I say, is not this the cause that the trees of thy vineyard have become corrupted?

**49** And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Let us go to and hew down the trees of the vineyard and cast them into the fire, that they shall not cumber the ground of my vineyard, for I have done all. What could I have done more for my vineyard?

**50** But, behold, ***the servant*** said unto the Lord of the vineyard: Spare it a little longer.

**51** And the Lord said: Yea, I will spare it a little longer, for it grieveth me that I should lose the trees of my vineyard.

**57** And the Lord of the vineyard said unto ***the servant:*** Pluck not the wild branches from the trees, save it be those which are most bitter; and in them ye shall graft according to that which I have said.

**58** And we will nourish again the trees of the vineyard, and we will trim up the branches thereof; and we will pluck from the trees those branches which are ripened, that must perish, and cast them into the fire.

**61** Wherefore, go to, and call servants, that we may labor diligently with our might in the vineyard, that we may prepare the way, that I may bring forth again the natural fruit, which natural fruit is good and the most precious above all other fruit.

**62** Wherefore, let us go to and labor with our might this last time, for behold the end draweth nigh, and this is for the last time that I shall prune my vineyard.

**70** And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard sent ***his servant; and the servant*** went and did as the Lord had commanded him, and brought other servants; ***and they were few.***

**71** And the Lord of the vineyard said unto them: Go to, and labor in the vineyard, with your might. For behold, this is the last time that I shall nourish my vineyard; for the end is nigh at hand, and the season speedily cometh; and if ye labor with your might with me ye shall have joy in the fruit which I shall lay up unto myself against the time which will soon come.

**72** And it came to pass that the servants did go and labor with their mights; and the Lord of the vineyard labored also with them; and they did obey the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard in all things.

Many other places in the Book of Mormon point specifically to these points of reference, specifically to "the few":

**2 Nephi 28**

**14** They wear stiff necks and high heads; yea, and because of pride, and wickedness, and abominations, and whoredoms, ***they have all gone astray save it be a few,*** who are the humble followers of Christ; nevertheless, they are led, that in many instances they do err because they are taught by the precepts of men.

**1 Nephi 14**

**12** And it came to pass that I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, ***and its numbers were few,*** because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God, were also upon all the face of the earth; ***and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small,*** because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw.

**Mormon 8**

**36** And I know that ye do walk in the pride of your hearts; ***and there are none save a few only*** who do not lift themselves up in the pride of their hearts, unto the wearing of very fine apparel, unto envying, and strifes, and malice, and persecutions, and all manner of iniquities; and your churches, yea, even every one, have become polluted because of the pride of your hearts.

**37** For behold, ye do love money, and your substance, and your fine apparel, and the adorning of your churches, more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted.

**38** O ye pollutions, ye hypocrites, ye teachers, who sell yourselves for that which will canker, why have ye polluted ***the holy church of God?*** Why are ye ashamed to take upon you the name of Christ? Why do ye not think that greater is the value of an endless happiness than that misery which never dies—because of the praise of the world?

**39** Why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not?

**3 Nephi 7**

**7** And they did cause a great contention in the land, insomuch that the more righteous part of the people had nearly all become wicked; ***yea, there were but few righteous men among them.***

**Back to Isaiah 1**

**8** And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city.

**9** Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us ***a very small remnant,*** we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.

**(13-5) Isaiah 1:8. What Is a "Cottage in a Vineyard"?**

When the vineyard and the cucumber crops were ready to harvest, small booths, or huts, were built in the fields so the owner or his servants could watch over the harvest and protect it from thieves or animals. These huts were generally crudely made and hastily erected. After the harvest, they were abandoned and quickly became dilapidated and forlorn relics of the harvest. "The daughter of Zion" was to be like that—once proud and useful, but now, through her own spiritual neglect, an empty and forlorn relic. (See Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah,* 1:55–56.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* [Third ed., 2003], p. 137)

So once again, we have imagery of desolation, the few (remnant) of the righteous, and the unfruitfulness of Israel, specifically here mentioned "the daughter(s) of Zion"… Another application of the "daughters of Zion being unfruitful" would be the falling fertility rates of the daugh-

ters of Zion, which we can clearly point to as objective realities of our time.

Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because there was not found a single righteous person within (Genesis 18:26–33). Isaiah says here that there will come a point of time in "Israel" (i.e., America and the Church), where, if it wasn't for a few righteous people (a remnant), America would become even as Sodom and Gomorrah.

**1 Nephi 14**

> **7** For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men; a work which shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or on the other—either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds unto their being brought down into captivity, ***and also into destruction, both temporally and spiritually,*** according to the captivity of the devil, of which I have spoken.

**2 Nephi 30**

> **10** For the time speedily cometh that the Lord God shall cause a great division among the people, and the wicked will he destroy; and he will spare his people, ***yea, even if it so be that he must destroy the wicked by fire.***

**Helaman 13**

> **13** But blessed are they who will repent, for them will I spare. ***But behold, if it were not for the righteous who are in this great city, behold, I would cause that fire should come down out of heaven and destroy it.***
>
> **14** But behold, ***it is for the righteous' sake that it is spared.*** But behold, the time cometh, saith the Lord, ***that when ye shall cast out the righteous from among you, then shall ye be ripe for destruction;*** yea, wo be unto this great city, because of the wickedness and abominations which are in her.

The Lord warns that if the Gentiles do not repent after the marvelous work and a wonder moves forward, the Lord will destroy them "even by fire," which was the same way in which He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.

**Back to Isaiah 1**

**10** Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.

**11** To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.

**12** When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

**13** Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.

**14** Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.

**15** And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

**(13-7) Isaiah 1:10–15. The Hypocrisy of Insincere Worship**

> These verses do not mean that the Lord rejected the law of Moses, particularly the performances and ordinances of the law. The condemnation here is of the hypocritical fulfillment of the Mosaic offerings and feasts. Israel misused these religious activities because they fulfilled only the outward requirements and did not worship with full purpose of heart, turning their worship toward the Savior. (See Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 58–59; Young, *Book of Isaiah,* 1:61–62). To refer to the people of Israel as Sodom and Gomorrah (v. 10) vividly depicts how deeply the people had sunk into sin and depravity.
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* [Third ed., 2003], p. 137)

Here, once again, Israel's duality is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We don't practice the law of Moses (i.e., Mosaic Law), but we do perform ordinances of the law which include offerings and feasts. In what ways can our "sacrifices" become "vain oblations"? The answer, once again, is priestcraft.

**1 Samuel 15**

> **22** And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.
>
> **23** For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

**Elder Neal A. Maxwell**

> So many times prophets warn about the dangers of selfishness—the inordinate and excessive concern with self. The distance between constant self-pleasing and self-worship is shorter than we think. Stubborn selfishness is actually rebellion against God, because, warned Samuel, "stubbornness is as … idolatry." (1 Sam. 15:23.)
>
> Selfishness is much more than an ordinary problem because it activates all the cardinal sins! It is the detonator in the breaking of the Ten Commandments. … The selfish individual thus seeks to please not God, but himself.
>
> ("Put Off the Natural Man, and Come Off Conqueror," General Conference, October 1990)

**2 Nephi 26**

> **29** He commandeth that there shall be no priestcrafts; for, behold, priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion.
>
> **30** Behold, the Lord hath forbidden this thing; wherefore, the Lord God hath given a commandment that all men should have charity, which charity is love. And except they should have charity they were nothing. Wherefore, if they should have charity they would not suffer the laborer in Zion to perish.
>
> **31** But the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish.

We can start to clearly see the connections being made here between being selfish ("might not this money better be spent?"), priestcraft, rebellion (v. 5), and now all our actions and "praise" to the Lord being in fact vain, or meaningless—just as King Saul's sacrifice done in disobedience was likewise counted unto him for evil.

Saints misuse religious activities, such as the Sacrament, when they fulfill only the outward requirements and do not worship with full purpose of heart. In verse 13, we find that it gets so bad that even the temple becomes tainted. One only has to accidentally stumble on the dark side of the web to see members tainting the temple. This ties directly into the exact same points of reference.

**Doctrine and Covenants 112**

> **23** Verily, verily, I say unto you, darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the people, and all flesh has become corrupt before my face.
>
> **24** Behold, vengeance cometh speedily upon the inhabitants of the earth, a day of wrath, a day of burning, a day of desolation, of weep-

ing, of mourning, and of lamentation; and as a whirlwind it shall come upon all the face of the earth, saith the Lord.

**25** And upon ***my house*** shall it begin, and from ***my house*** shall it go forth, saith the Lord;

**26** First among those among you, saith the Lord, who have professed to know my name and have not known me, ***and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house,*** saith the Lord.

In verse 14, the Lord takes specific aim at our Fast and Testimony meetings and our holiday worship (i.e., Christmas, Easter, etc.). In verse 15, He says that the members of the Church have blood on their hands. What blood could the Lord be referring to here? The answer is given in the Book of Mormon, by Captain Moroni, in Alma 60:2–14. Moroni lays out the best explanation for the importance of doing missionary work found in the Book of Mormon. "Behold, [do you members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] suppose that ye could sit upon your thrones, and because of the exceeding goodness of God ye could do nothing and He would deliver you? Behold, if you have supposed this, ye have supposed in vain. Do ye supposed that, because so many of your brethren have been killed [spiritually] it is because of their wickedness? I say unto you, if ye have supposed this ye have supposed in vain; for I say unto you, there are many who have fallen… and behold it is to your condemnation."

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**12** And in that day ***all who are found upon the watch-tower,*** or in other words, all mine Israel, shall be saved.

**Ezekiel 33**

**1** Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

**2** Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman:

**3** If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people;

**4** Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.

**5** He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.

**6** But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; ***but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.***

**7** So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.

**8** When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; ***but his blood will I require at thine hand.***

**9** Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

**Matthew 24**

**52** Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, ***to give them meat in due season?***

**53** Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

**54** And verily, I say unto you, He shall make him ruler over all his goods.

**55** But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and shall appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

**56** And thus cometh the end of the wicked according to the prophecy of Moses, saying, They should be cut off from among the people. But the end of the earth is not yet, but by and by.

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

**81** Behold, ***I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor.***

**82** Therefore, they are left without excuse, and their sins are upon their own heads.

**83** He that seeketh me early shall find me, and shall not be forsaken.

**84** Therefore, tarry ye, and labor diligently, that you may be perfected in your ministry to go forth among the Gentiles for the last time, as many as the mouth of the Lord shall name, to bind up the law and seal up the testimony, and to prepare the saints for the hour of judgment which is to come;

**85** That their souls may escape the wrath of God, the desolation of abomination which awaits the wicked, both in this world and in the world to come. Verily, I say unto you, let those who are not the first elders continue in the vineyard until the mouth of the Lord shall call them, ***for their time is not yet come; their garments are not clean from the blood of this generation.***

**Jacob 1**

**19** And we did magnify our office unto the Lord, taking upon us the responsibility, answering the sins of the people upon our own ***heads if we did not teach them the word of God with all diligence; wherefore, by laboring with our might their blood might not come upon our garments; otherwise their blood would come upon our garments,*** and we would not be found spotless at the last day.

Our hands are full of blood because we as Saints are either practicing priestcraft and/or we are not being watchmen. The Lord is returning for the watchmen, those whose garments are clean from the blood of this generation.

**Back to Isaiah 1**

**16** Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;

**17** Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

**18** Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

**(13-8) Isaiah 1:16–20. Call to Repentance, Promise of Forgiveness**

In the midst of a scathing denunciation of the house of Israel, the Lord reminded them that they could be saved as a nation if they would truly repent. This scripture is often used to encourage individuals to repent and seek forgiveness, but it was originally given to a nation, not a person. President Joseph Fielding Smith wrote:

"This is not an individual promise, but one to a rebellious nation. No matter how many prophets the Lord sent to Israel and Judah, and how many times he pleaded with them, all through their history they were rebellious.

"Here we find a promise that if they would return to the Lord, their past sins would be forgotten, and he would again receive them as his people and bless them abundantly, and they should continue to be his covenant people." (*Answers to Gospel Questions,* 2:180.)

> Nephi, however, said that he took the words of Isaiah and "did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning" (1 Nephi 19:23). Certainly this beautiful promise, though originally given to [Judah and] Israel as a nation, can be "likened" to [Ephraim and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints].
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* [Third edition, 2003], pp. 137–138)

The Lord made a similar declaration to Saints, as he did to Israel in the past, in D&C 84:54–58:

**Doctrine and Covenants 84**

> **54** And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—
>
> **55** Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation.
>
> **56** And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all.
>
> **57** And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written—
>
> **58** That they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom; otherwise there remaineth a scourge and judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion.

Also, Isaiah 1:18 is a scripture mastery.

**Back to Isaiah 1**

**19** If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

**20** But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

This exact same promise is a running theme in the Book of Mormon:

**2 Nephi 4**

> **4** … Inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments ye shall prosper in the land; and inasmuch as ye will not keep my commandments ye shall be cut off from my presence.

It appears repeatedly throughout the Book of Mormon. The Lord, speaking to the Saints, gave the same promise once again in D&C 64:34–36:

**Doctrine and Covenants 64**

> **34** Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days.
>
> **35** And the rebellious shall be cut off out of the land of Zion, and shall be sent away, and shall not inherit the land.
>
> **36** For, verily I say that the rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim, wherefore they shall be plucked out.

The chapter heading for **Doctrine and Covenants 64** states:

> *He that is tithed will not be burned at the Lord's coming; the Saints are warned against debt.*

Pay your tithing, live within your means!

The entirety of **3 Nephi 24** also ties directly into this as well: the abolishment of priestcraft, the law of consecration, the willing and obedient—those that feared the Lord—will be gathered and will eat the good of the land of Zion and shall be spared "the sword," etc. This is echoed in **Doctrine and Covenants 45** as well, in which the Lord says that the wicked will "take up the sword, one against another," and further:

> **68** And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety.
>
> **69** And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another.
>
> **70** And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore we cannot stand.
>
> **71** And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy.

**Back to Isaiah 1**

**21** How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.

**22** Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water:

**23** Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, once full of judgment with righteousness lodged in it, now has tares in its midst. The Lord taught about this future time period of the church in the last days when he taught the parable of the wheat and the tares (D&C 86). Joseph Smith further explained that in each one of the Lord's parables, "the Kingdom of heaven shall be likened unto" dealt with the church at different stages in the last days as it progressed towards the Second Coming: Parable of the Sower, Parable of the Tares, Parable of the Mustard Seed. The Lord says that even though the Church will become rich (temporally with silver), that silver will become worthless (i.e., "vain," because of priestcrafts) and the Saints, once pure wine, are now mixed with water. The latter is given in another parable taught by the Savior in which he said, "ye are the salt of the earth"; if salt loses its savor, it is good for nothing (Matthew 5:13–14). The only way for salt to lose its savor is by mixture (losing purity). The Lord then describes the heirs of the Church becoming rebellious, making companions of thieves, that everyone loves gifts/things, and their desires are that of temporal rewards. One only has to check out "LDS" YouTubers, podcasters, book writers, etc. to find this fulfilled literally to a T. Those engaged in this priestcraft are thieves, and they only "make companions" with other thieves, for they love the vain things of the world.

There is also a condition of rampant fatherlessness in Israel, with widows and single motherhood being found everywhere… And the Elders of Israel who should be preaching the doctrines that would save these women in this condition (i.e., "the patriarchal order") are instead thieves; they grind the faces of the poor and only worry about themselves.

**Back to Isaiah 1**

**24** Therefore saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:

**25** And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin:

**26** And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.

**27** Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.

This is why having a functioning understanding of the macro last-day timeline is precious in understanding Isaiah. We understand that Joseph Smith will return, we understand that "angels and men will be coworkers" in the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem,

etc., so when the Lord says, "I will restore thy judges ***as at the first,*** and thy counsellors ***as at the beginning,"*** what do we think he is referring to? We are talking about the return of Joseph Smith Jr. and those faithful brethren that surrounded him! And ***afterward,*** meaning ***after their return,*** thou shalt be called "the city of righteousness, the faithful city, Zion, the New Jerusalem"!

**Finishing Isaiah 1**

**28** And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed.

**29** For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen.

**30** For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water.

**31** And the strong shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them.

The Lord said, in Doctrine and Covenants 112:23–26, that he will first start at His Church when he says, "I will turn my hand upon ***thee."*** He is talking about the Church itself. This is the day when the wheat shall be separated from the tares. The Lord says he will then bind the tares (i.e., transgressors in the church) with the sinners of the world together, and He promises them that they will "both burn together." He also says, in that day, the big identifier of those who forsook the Lord in his own church would be those who have desired the oaks and their own personal gardens. The footnote is terebinth trees, which were used in idol worship. Meaning, the main identifier is idolatry of things made by man's hands (e.g., cell phones, tablets, etc.).

**Hymn 85. "Though in the Outward Church Below"**

1. Though in the outward Church below,
   Both wheat and tares together grow;
   Jesus ere long will weed the crop,
   And pluck the tares in anger up . . .
4. We seem alike when here we meet;
   Strangers may think we are all wheat;
   But to the Lord's all-searching eyes,
   Each heart appears without disguise.
5. The tares are spared for various ends,
   Some for the sake of praying friends,
   Others the Lord against their will,
   Employs, his counsels to fulfill.
6. But though they grow so tall and strong,
   His plan will not require them long;
   In harvest, when he saves his own,
   The tares shall into hell be thrown.

(*The Joseph Smith Papers,* "Collection of Sacred Hymns, 1835," pp. 115–116)

**Orson Pratt**

What will become of the Latter-day Saints? When the judgments shall have ceased, which will be visited first on the house of the Lord, they who remain will spread forth, increase and multiply; and they will build upon this continent a great and magnificent city, called Zion, or the New Jerusalem. And they will build a Temple within that city, upon which a cloud will rest by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; and upon all the assemblies of the people of Zion the Lord will create this glorious appendage, and will shed forth his loving kindness. This is the destiny of Zion, as foreseen by Isaiah and David, and many of the Prophets who have predicted concerning her.

Says one, I will wait to see if God will do these things. But peradventure, while waiting, you may be cut asunder, and your portion appointed among the unbelievers, where there are weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Woe unto them who wait to see if God will really fulfill the prophecies of his servants, and who repent not of their sins! But, blessed are they who repent as soon as they hear the sound of the message, and who turn unto the Lord their God with all their hearts, for they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, which bears record of the Father and the Son, and they shall be prepared for the dispensation of his providences, and hail his coming with great joy. The people of the antediluvian world waited one day too long; they waited until the flood came, when it was too late, and they were swept away, eight persons only escaping.

The Savior, speaking of his second coming, said—"As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded. But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Did the Lord raise up a Prophet and warn the antediluvians by new revelation? He did: and he did the same in the case of the people in the days of Lot. Will he do the same prior to his second coming? He will. He is doing it by means of his Gospel; revealed for the purpose of saving all who receive it, who gather to a place of safety, as Noah and those who believed his message did.

But the day will come when the Lord will not spare any who remain in Babylon; that will be, however, when this prophecy of Isaiah is completely fulfilled—"I will gather them from the east, and from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; Even every one that is called by name." All this is to take place in the very dispensation in which the angel should bring the Gospel, which is the dispensation of the fullness of times. The Apostle Paul also refers to the same great event, in the following language: "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in him." It is the purpose of God then, not to confine the gathering to earthly Saints alone. "What," says one, "are immortal beings coming down from heaven to live on this earth?" Certainly, and thus fulfill numerous prophecies in the Scriptures; one of which is, "They shall reign on the earth." Who are these persons? They are they whom John heard singing in heaven about it. They said, "Thou hast redeemed us out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." What a glorious song! While we are singing about going to heaven, all heavenly beings are singing about coming back to earth to live and to reign. Why? Because this is their inheritance, they have been made worthy through the blood of the lamb, and their Redeemer will be their King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and to his dominion there shall be no end. When this takes place, then will be fulfilled the saying, that all things which are in Christ, both in heaven and on earth, shall be gathered together. The wicked, too, shall be gathered, but in bundles ready for the burning.

Marvel not, therefore, Latter-day Saints, that you have been exalted out from among the Gentile nations! Marvel not that the Lord has said to the North, give up, and to the south, keep not back, bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth! Marvel not at the Savior's parable of the gathering of all kinds of fish and bringing them to the shore! By and by, angels will come among the Latter-day Saints who have been gathered from the nations, and they will pluck out one here, and another there, putting them into their place. The separation of the fish will take place; the bad will be cast away, while the good will be reserved in vessels for the Master's use."

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 18, p. 222)

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

> The thief of eternal life
>
> Procrastination, as it may be applied to gospel principles, is the thief of eternal life, which is life in the presence of the Father and the Son. There are many among us, even members of the Church, who feel that there is no need for haste in the observance of gospel principles and the keeping of the commandments.
>
> Nephi wrote of the people of the last days: "Yea, and there shall be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die; and it shall be well with us.
>
> "And there shall also be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry; nevertheless, fear God—he will justify in committing a little sin; yea, lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this; and do all these things, for tomorrow we die; and if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God." (2 Ne. 28:7–8.)
>
> Do not think that this was said of the world, or even the "stranger ... within our gates." (See Exod. 20:10.) It is said of members of the Church. Moreover, Nephi warns us that in the last days there will be many who will follow Satan. I could go on and read more from Second Nephi, but I am going to give you the chapter and verse so when you go home, get out your Book of Mormon and read Second Nephi, Chapter 28, verses 20–29.
>
> We are living in the last days. Have we not heard individuals talk as Nephi said they would? Are there not many who excuse themselves and lull themselves to sleep in "carnal security," thinking that the Lord will overlook their little sins? Are there not those among us who are denying the power of the devil, and who deny that there is a devil? Do they not "spiritualize" the torments of hell and say there is no hell? Have you not heard these things taught? In this manner, Satan is raging in the hearts of the people, and members of the Church do not entirely escape his cunning sophistries!
>
> ("Procrastination Is the Thief of Eternal Life," *Conference Report,* April 1969, p. 121)

# Isaiah 2–4, 2 Nephi 12–14

## Isaiah Chapter Two (2 Nephi 12)

**Isaiah 2 (2 Nephi 12)**

*Isaiah sees the latter-day temple, gathering of Israel, and millennial judgment and peace—The proud and wicked will be brought low at the Second Coming—*

**1** The word that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem:

**2** And it shall come to pass in the last days, when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it.

**2 Nephi 12:1–4. "The Mountain of the Lord's House"**

The word *mountain* is used in the scriptures in different allegorical or figurative senses. In 2 Nephi 12:1–4 the word *mountain* refers to a high place of God, a place of revelation, even the temple of the Lord.

"This temple [Salt Lake Temple] on this temple block is that house of the God of Jacob that our pioneer fathers started to build when they were a thousand miles from transportation, and it took them forty years to build it" (LeGrand Richards, in Conference Report, Oct. 1975, p. 77; or *Ensign,* Nov. 1975, p. 51).

(*New Testament Student Manual* (Revised ed., 1996), PDF Version, p. 33)

**(B-5) Geographical Designations of Zion: Places of Safety**

Ancient Jerusalem, and particularly the temple site of that city, has been referred to as Mount Zion (see 2 Samuel 5:7–9; 1 Kings 8:1; Isaiah 29:7–8), and members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have used the term *Zion* to identify their own locations (see Talmage, *Articles of Faith,* p. 347), but as used in the Doctrine and Covenants, *Zion* most often refers either to the people and their condition of purity or to the center place of Zion in the last days—namely, Jackson County, Missouri.

Though Zion is foretold in other scriptures (see 3 Nephi 21:22–25; Ether 13:2–12; Moses 7:61–64), only in the Doctrine and Covenants can be found the directives for its establishment, its laws and principles, and its location. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the New Jerusalem would be the first of Zion communities built in preparation for the Millennium. The New Jerusalem will be called "an 'holy city' … because it is a place of righteousness" (*History of the Church,* 2:254), and it will be located at Independence, Jackson County, Missouri (see D&C 45:66–67; 57:1–3). The New Jerusalem is spoken of as "the center place" (D&C 57:3), or the administrative center, or capital, for all Zion (see Dyer, *Refiner's Fire,* pp. 99–104; *History of the Church,* 5:212). It is also spoken of as "Mount Zion" (D&C 84:2) and the "mountain of the Lord" (*History of the Church,* 6:319). ). From the beginnings laid in the New Jerusalem, the establishment of Zion communities will go forth throughout the world. The stakes of Zion will be the means through which the Zion societies will be prepared and strengthened (see D&C 82:14, 101:21, 133:9). Zion will first grow to include all of North and South America (see *History of the Church,* 6:318–319, 321) and eventually the entire earth (see Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses,* 9:138).

("Enrichment B: Establishing Zion," *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (2018))

**Back to Isaiah 2 (2 Nephi 12)**

**3** And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

**(13-11) Isaiah 2:3. "Out of Zion Shall Go Forth the Law … the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem"**

President Joseph Fielding Smith gave the following explanation of this prophetic statement of Isaiah:

"We are informed in the revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, that the city of Zion and the New Jerusalem is one and the same. [D&C 28:9; 42:9; 45:66–67; 57:2; 58:7.] …

"Jerusalem of old, after the Jews have been cleansed and sanctified from all their sin, shall become a holy city where the Lord shall dwell and from whence he shall send forth his word unto all people. Likewise, on this continent, the city of Zion, New Jerusalem, shall be built, and from it the law of God shall also go forth. There will be no conflict, for each city shall be headquarters for the Redeemer of the world, and from each he shall send forth his proclamations as occasion may require. Jerusalem shall be the gathering place of Judah and his fellows of the house of Israel, and Zion shall be the gathering place of Ephraim and his fellows, upon whose heads shall be conferred 'the richer blessings.' …

"These two cities, one in the land of Zion and one in Palestine, are to become capitals for the kingdom of God during the millennium….

Moreover, before many years have passed away, the Lord will command the building of the City Zion, and Jerusalem in Palestine will in due time be cleansed and become a holy city and the habitation of the Jews after they are cleansed and are willing to accept Jesus Christ as their Redeemer." (Doctrines of Salvation, 3:69–71.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 138)

**Back to Isaiah 2 (2 Nephi 12)**

**4** And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks—nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

**5** O house of Jacob, come ye and let us walk in the light of the Lord; yea, come, for ye have all gone astray, every one to his wicked ways.

**(13-12) Isaiah 2:4–5. Establishment of the Millennium**

These verses deal with the ushering in of the millennial era and with the changes that will accompany it. The writings of Isaiah as found in the Book of Mormon show the following additional phrase in verse 5: "Yea, come, for ye have all gone astray, every one to his wicked ways" (2 Nephi 12:5). This verse indicates a widespread apostasy in Israel and the return of Israel to the Lord before the Second Coming.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 139)

**2 Nephi 12:4. Time of Peace**

**Elder Dallin H. Oaks** spoke of the peace that will finally come to the earth after the Lord's Second Coming. He also identified the reason why there will be no peace prior to that time: "Many take comfort from the Old Testament prophecy that nations will 'beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks' (Micah 4:3). But this prophecy only applies to that time of peace which follows the time when the God of Jacob 'will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths' (4:2). For now, we have wars and conflicts, and everywhere they

are rooted in violations of the commandments of God" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1990, 92; or *Ensign,* May 1990, 72).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

We learn in verses 1–3 that the Church has ***already been restored*** and established in "the mountains." He describes a state in which Jacob, the righteous/spiritual element of Israel, has gone astray post that. Israel's dualism is that of America and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Isaiah says here, "ye have all gone astray every one to his wicked ways." The manual says that this indicates "a widespread apostasy in Israel and the return of Israel to the Lord before the Second Coming." We learned about this in Chapter One, where the Lord says he would refine his own house first. We also clearly learn about this period in the parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees (D&C 101): "And while [the servants] were at variance one with another they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord." As Elder Oaks stated above, the peace described in verse 4 does not begin for the Saints until after the New Jerusalem.

**Back to Isaiah 2 (2 Nephi 12)**

**6** Therefore, O Lord, thou hast forsaken thy people, the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the east, and hearken unto soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers.

**(13-13) Isaiah 2:6–22. The Proud and the Wicked to Be Brought Low**

Isaiah 2 summarizes the basic spiritual problems that troubled Israel in Isaiah's day. The verses found in 2 Nephi 12:5–22 reprove the people of the Lord, for the same spiritual problems will prevail again among the people before the Second Coming. This passage is another excellent example of dualistic prophecy (see Enrichment E for a discussion of prophetic dualism). Though Isaiah's prophecy was given "concerning Judah and Jerusalem" (v. 1), it is obviously also related to [Ephraim and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in] the last days and the Second Coming of Jesus.

*Verse 6.* They were "replenished from the east," or in other words, they looked to the religious philosophies and the gods of the Assyrians and other heathen countries for power and sustenance. Today people look to many other religions and philosophies of men for wisdom and guidance instead of to the gospel.

*Verse 6.* They "hearken unto soothsayers" (2 Nephi 12:6), those false prophets who claimed to be able to foretell the future. Today, true prophets are largely ignored, and all kinds of false religionists and counselors are looked to for guidance.

*Verse 6.* "They please themselves in the children of strangers" or, as C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch translated the phrase, "and with the children of foreigners they go hand in hand" (*Commentary on the Old Testament,* 7:1:118). In short, ancient Israel was joining the heathen nations in all their wickedness, and modern society is joining with the influences of the world rather than looking to the Lord.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 139)

Finding faith in the East of today is found in the obsession of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam. It is frightening the amount to which the West now idolizes the "spiritual journey" of traveling through India, for example. Many would point to the "false religionists and counselors" that Saints will be looking to for guidance as false prophets in purely a religious context. However, religionists and counselors are separated here, meaning the counselors are referring to secular counseling and not to that of religion. Examples being therapists, psychologists, and even doctors, if they are trusted and heeded over men of God. Obviously, priestcraft has become a huge problem by this point, as "the servants" decide a better use of the money being in the hands of the exchangers… If, once again, Israel is the United States of America and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, "joining the heathen nations" by going "hand in hand" with the children of foreigners simply put is modern day "multiculturalism" and moral relativism.

**President Brigham Young** taught:

And when the spirit of persecution, the spirit of hatred, of wrath, and malice ceases in the world against this people, it will be the time that this people have apostatized and joined hands with the wicked…

(*Discourses of Brigham Young,* p. 112)

In other words, when we enter "the time of peace" (Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees)—the time in which the spirit of persecution, the spirit of hatred, of wrath, and of malice ceases in the world against this people—it will be because/when they be replenished from the east and hearken unto soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers.

**Back to Isaiah 2 (2 Nephi 12)**

**7** Their land also is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures; their land is also full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots.

**(13-13) Isaiah 2:6–22. The Proud and the Wicked to Be Brought Low**

*Verse 7.* The land was "full of silver and gold," that is, the people were wealthy and materialistic. Their hearts were set on the things of the world. Again in the last days, materialism runs rampant.

*Verse 7.* The land was "full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots." The horse was a symbol of warfare, as was the chariot. Today is an age characterized by "wars and rumors of war" (see JS–M 1:28.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 139)

Materialism and the love of bloodshed are characteristics of all civilizations in decline, including the Nephites, Jaredites, Romans, etc. It's hard to imagine a generation of Saints or people (the United States of America) more materialistic than that of today; it's also hard to image—looking at pop culture, video games, etc.—a culture which loves war more. Horses being a symbol of warfare could also mean being full of weapons of war.

**President Ezra Taft Benson**

Every generation has its tests and its chance to stand and prove itself. Would you like to know of one of our toughest tests? Hear the warning words of President Brigham Young, 'The worst fear I have about this people is that they will get rich in this country, forget God and His people, wax fat, and kick themselves out of the Church and go to hell. This people will stand mobbing, robbing, poverty, and all manner of persecution and be true. But my greatest fear is that they cannot stand wealth.

Ours then seems to be the toughest test of all for the evils are more subtle, more clever. It all seems less menacing and it is harder to detect. While every test of righteousness represents a struggle, this particular test seems like no test at all, no struggle and so could be the most deceiving of all tests.

Do you know what peace and prosperity can do to a people—It can put them to sleep. The Book of Mormon warned us of how [Satan], in the last days, would lead us away carefully down to hell. The Lord has on the earth some potential spiritual giants whom He saved for some six thousand years to help bear off the Kingdom triumphantly, and the devil is trying to put them to sleep. The [adversary] knows that he probably won't be too successful in getting them to commit many great and malignant sins of commission. So he puts them into a deep sleep,

like Gulliver, while he strands them with little sins of omission. And what good is a sleepy, neutralized, lukewarm giant as a leader?

We have too many potential spiritual giants who should be more vigorously lifting their homes, the kingdom, and the country. We have many who feel they are good men [and women], but they need to be good for something stronger patriarchs, courageous missionaries, valiant [family history and] temple workers, dedicated patriots, devoted quorum members. In short, we must be shaken and awakened from a spiritual snooze.

("Our Obligation and Challenge" [address delivered at regional representatives seminar] Sept. 30, 1977, 2–3)

**President Brigham Young**

[I]f we do not wake up and cease to long after the things of this earth, we will find that we as individuals will go down to hell, although the Lord will preserve a people unto himself. Perhaps, brethren and sisters, you will not get my meaning, but now go to work and let these holes in the ground alone, and let the Gentiles alone, who would destroy us if they had the power. You are running after them, and some of our brethren are putting their wives and daughters into their society, and will go to the devil with them too, if they do not look out. I would not have a dollar on the earth if I had to get it there. It has been the kingdom of God with me. What I have, I have got in this kingdom. Well, now, some of the Elders are running after these holes in the ground, and I see men before me, in this house that have no right to be here. They are as corrupt in their hearts as they can be, and we take them by the hand and call them brother. You will go to hell, lots of you, unless you repent. You may think this is plain talk, it is not as plain as you will find by and by. If you should ever go to the gates of heaven, Jesus will say he never knew you. While you have been saying your prayers and going to your meetings and are as corrupt in your hearts as men can be. You had better stop now and repent of your sins and sin no more, while there is yet time, and before the doors are closed against you. I want to wake you up, and if I had the power to lift the veil from your eyes and let you see things as they are, you would be astonished. Not but what there are a great majority of the people as good as they know how to be. Now I will say, bless the people, that they may do better, but show some of the Elders of Israel according to their present conduct a dollar on one side and eternal life on the other, and I fear they would choose the dollar.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 18, Discourse 38, p. 304)

**Back to Isaiah 2 (2 Nephi 12)**

**8** Their land is also full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made.

**(13-13) Isaiah 2:6–22. The Proud and the Wicked to Be Brought Low**

*Verse 8.* The land was filled with idolatry then, and people still turn to false gods today, though not necessarily to idols made of wood or stone.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 139)

**President Nelson** attempted to address the idolatry worship in the church in his 2018 talk "Sisters' Participation in the Gathering of Israel." He extended an invitation to the women of the church:

First, I invite you to participate in a 10-day fast from social media and from any other media that bring negative and impure thoughts to your mind. Pray to know which influences to remove during your fast. The effect of your 10-day fast may surprise you. What do you notice after taking a break from perspectives of the world that have been wounding your spirit? Is there a change in where you now want to spend your time and energy? Have any of your priorities shifted—even just a little? I urge you to record and follow through with each impression.

("Sisters' Participation in the Gathering of Israel," General Conference, October 2018)

**Back to Isaiah 2 (2 Nephi 12)**

**9** And the mean man boweth not down, and the great man humbleth himself not, therefore, forgive him not.

**(13-13) Isaiah 2:6–22. The Proud and the Wicked to Be Brought Low**

*Verse 9.* The "mean man boweth *not* down, and the great man humbleth himself *not"* (2 Nephi 12:9; emphasis added). The differences in the Book of Mormon account of Isaiah's writings, noted by the italics, show that Isaiah was not making further reference to idolatry but was referring to the fact that men would not worship the true God. In the preface to the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord indicated this failure would be a major concern of the last days. (see D&C 1:16.)

Because of her sins, ancient Israel brought upon herself the judgments of God, and because of the same problems the [members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] of the last days will likewise bring sorrow and problems upon themselves.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 139)

**2 Nephi 12:9. The Mean Man and the Great Man**

The phrase "the mean [ordinary or common] man boweth not down, and the great man humbleth himself not" (2 Nephi 12:9) indicates that from the lowest to the highest in society, none were humble enough to accept God.

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

The Book of Mormon gives us a clear understanding of what Isaiah was contrasting here between verses 8–9. Not only will there be idol worship of our own hands that is rampant, but atheism will be a large issue, too. Simply put, men actively worship mammon while actively not worshipping God. This contrast was said poignantly recently at conference: "What we need here is less Wi-Fi and more Nephi!" (Elder Terence M. Vinson, True Disciples of the Savior, Oct. 2019), i.e., we need less idolatry and more true worship.

Not worshiping the true God in humility also has reference to those who follow after their own Gods and refuse to submit to the Lord's earthly keys.

**Doctrine and Covenants 1**

**13** And the anger of the Lord is kindled, and his sword is bathed in heaven, and it shall fall upon the inhabitants of the earth.

**14** And the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, shall be cut off from among the people;

**15** For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant;

**16** They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.

**Doctrine and Covenants 64**

**34** Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days.

**35** And the rebellious shall be cut off out of the land of Zion, and shall be sent away, and shall not inherit the land.

**36** For, verily I say that the rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim, wherefore they shall be plucked out.

**37** Behold, I, the Lord, have made my church in these last days like unto a judge sitting on a hill, or in a high place, to judge the nations.

**38** For it shall come to pass that the inhabitants of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion.

**39** And liars and hypocrites shall be proved by them, and they who are not apostles and prophets shall be known.

**40** And even the bishop, who is a judge, and his counselors, if they are not faithful in their stewardships shall be condemned, and others shall be planted in their stead.

**41** For, behold, I say unto you that Zion shall flourish, and the glory of the Lord shall be upon her;

**42** And she shall be an ensign unto the people, and there shall come unto her out of every nation under heaven.

**43** And the day shall come when the nations of the earth shall tremble because of her, and shall fear because of her terrible ones. The Lord hath spoken it. Amen.

**Back to Isaiah 2 (2 Nephi 12)**

**10** O ye wicked ones, enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for the fear of the Lord and the glory of his majesty shall smite thee.

**11** And it shall come to pass that the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

**12** For the day of the Lord of Hosts soon cometh upon all nations, yea, upon every one; yea, upon the proud and lofty, and upon every one who is lifted up, and he shall be brought low.

**13** Yea, and the day of the Lord shall come upon all the cedars of Lebanon, for they are high and lifted up; and upon all the oaks of Bashan;

**14** And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills, and upon all the nations which are lifted up, and upon every people;

**15** And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall;

**16** And upon all the ships of the sea, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures.

**17** And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

**18** And the idols he shall utterly abolish.

**19** And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for the fear of the Lord shall come upon them and the glory of his majesty shall smite them, when he riseth to shake terribly the earth.

**20** In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which he hath made for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats;

**21** To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for the fear of the Lord shall come upon them and the majesty of his glory shall smite them, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

**(13-14) Isaiah 2:13. What Were the "Cedars of Lebanon" and the "Oaks of Bashan"?**

They were the loftiest and most impressive trees in the ancient Middle East. They therefore symbolized not only the great beauty of the land that would be destroyed but also the proud and lofty people of the earth (see Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary,* 7:1:122–23).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 139)

**(13-15) Isaiah 2:16. What Is Meant by the Phrase "Ships of Tarshish"?**

Trade with other nations would cease. … The Book of Mormon affirms the completeness of the record from which its Isaiah citations were taken.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 140)

For a complete breakdown of verse 16, see *Old Testament Student Manual,* p. 140.

**(13-13) Isaiah 2:6–22. The Proud and the Wicked to Be Brought Low**

The brass plates contained other differences that clarify Isaiah's meaning. Compare Isaiah 2:10, 12–14, 16, 19, 21 with 2 Nephi 12:10, 12–14, 16, 19, 21.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 139)

Isaiah 2 verse 10 in the Book of Mormon (2 Nephi 12:10) clarifies that only the wicked ones will be hiding in the rocks. The changes to verse 12 add that urgency "soon cometh," as well as completeness of everyone. Verses 13–14, 16 clarify that it is not just the land, but also people and nations, that will be brought low. These verses tie directly into the Redemption of Zion and the Lord making bare His holy arm in the eyes of all nations (3 Nephi 21).

**Back to Isaiah 2 (2 Nephi 12)**

**22** Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?

**(13-16) Isaiah 2:22. "Cease Ye from Man"**

This expression is a warning about the weaknesses of trusting merely in man (see also 2 Nephi 4:34; 28:31; Topical Guide, s.v. "trust not in the arm of flesh").

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 140)

The Lord breathed the breath of life into the nostrils of man and he became a living soul. We know that a celestial body is that of flesh and bones (D&C 129:1), no blood. A large purpose of nostrils is to carry air to the lungs so that blood can carry oxygen throughout the body. This is not the case with the Lord and those with celestial bodies. Isaiah's warning here is to trust in God (who actually breathes the life into people) over those people whose very existence is only through the grace of God. To trust in the arm of flesh is to trust in our own wisdom, our own spirit-o-meters, etc. over that of the Lord and His mouthpieces—to ignore the Lord's mouthpiece is to ignore the Lord himself.

**Doctrine and Covenants 21**

**4** Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me;

**5** For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith.

## Isaiah Chapter Three (2 Nephi 13)

**Isaiah 3 (2 Nephi 13)**

*Judah and Jerusalem will be punished for their disobedience—The Lord pleads for and judges His people—The daughters of Zion are cursed and tormented for their worldliness—Compare Isaiah 3. About 559–545* B.C.

**1** For behold, the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem, and from Judah, the stay and the staff, the whole staff of bread, and the whole stay of water—

**2 Nephi 13:1. "The Stay and the Staff"**

The necessities of bread and water will dwindle during the siege. "The stay and the staff" described in 2 Nephi 13:1 foreshadows a spiritual famine of those who reject the Lord, who is "the whole staff of bread"—the bread of life—and "the whole stay of water"—the living water.

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

As always, in dualism, Judah is Ephraim and Jerusalem is Salt Lake City and Washington DC. Ephraim's war in America is likewise a spiritual war. This foreshadows a time where spirituality will be taken from those who reject the Lord and his doctrine, which is the meaning of the "whole" bread and water. President Nelson in recent years (2018–2020) has repeatedly made the observation that the Church is currently not practicing the fullness of the gospel and is still in the process of being restored ("this ongoing restoration process"). President Nelson also, in 2019, asked the members to ponder the question, "What would your life be like if your knowledge of the Book of Mormon was suddenly taken away?" He might as well have asked, "What would your life be like if the spirituality you have obtained was taken away?" From what we just read in Isaiah, can such a thing be taken away? The answer is yes. Under what condition(s)? The answer explained further in the Book of Mormon:

**2 Nephi 28**

**21** And others will [Satan] pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them carefully down to hell. ...

**24** Therefore, wo be unto him who is at ease in Zion!

**25** Wo be unto him that crieth: all is well! ...

**27** Yea, wo be unto him that sayeth: We have received, and we need no more! ...

**29** Wo be unto him who shall say we have received the word of God, and we need no more of the word of God, for we have enough!

**30** ... for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have.

The manual for the Religion 225 course "Foundations of the Restoration" says, "As students exercise faith, they can come to know that the practice of plural marriage in the latter days was part of the Restoration of all things." **Bruce R. McConkie** stated, "In the early days of this dispensation, as part of the promised restitution of all things, the Lord revealed the principle of plural marriage to the prophet." He continued, ***"obviously*** the holy practice will commence again [during] the ushering in of the Millennium" (*Mormon Doctrine,* pg. 578).

**President Nelson** in his April 2020 *Ensign* address said:

Why do we need such resilient faith? Because difficult days are ahead. Rarely in the future will it be easy or popular to be a faithful Latter-day Saint. Each of us will be tested. ... You will have days when you will be discouraged. So pray for courage not to give up! Sadly, some who you thought were your friends will betray you. And some things will simply seem unfair... Do whatever it takes to strengthen your faith in Jesus Christ by increasing your understanding of the doctrine taught in His restored Church and by relentlessly seeking truth.

("The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior's Second Coming," *Ensign,* April 2020)

Many have and will continue to reject "the ***whole*** staff of bread, and the ***whole*** stay of water," and from them shall be taken away even that which they have.

**Back to Isaiah 3 (2 Nephi 13)**

**2** The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient;

**3** The captain of fifty, and the honorable man, and the counselor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator.

**4** And I will give children unto them to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them.

**5** And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbor; the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honorable.

**2 Nephi 13:1–11. Punished as a Result of Wickedness**

Isaiah foresaw that Judah and Jerusalem would be punished by the Lord as a result of their wickedness. In 587 B.C. the city of Jerusalem was destroyed, and Judah was taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (1996), PDF Version, p. 33)

**(13-17) Isaiah 3:1–8. Prophetic Declaration of the Fall of Judah**

Isaiah described the eventual fall of Judah and Jerusalem in terms of the noted officials and respected persons of his day. These included government, military, educational, and religious leaders. With the loss of such individuals, the nation would fall under despotic reign at the hands of youthful puppets. Finally, it would rush toward anarchy as the last struggles for power were exercised within the ruling family. (See Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary,* 7:1:130–35.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 140)

**2 Nephi 13:2–3. "Mighty Man ... Eloquent Orator"**

All men in Judah and Jerusalem, regardless of their status in society (11 categories are mentioned in 2 Nephi 13:2–3), will be brought into captivity.

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

**2 Nephi 13:4. "Babes Shall Rule over Them"**

The untrained and young who had no status in society will be appointed to rule in captivity over those listed in 2 Nephi 13:2–3.

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

Once again, remember that Judah's dualism is Ephraim and Jerusalem's dualism is Salt Lake City and Washington DC, while Nebuchadnezzar's dualism is that of the Assyrian/Destroyer/etc.

Who is "the Assyrian" setting up to rule? Purple-haired babes who are setting up the culture in which the people are oppressed, everyone by another, and everyone by his neighbor, while the child behaves himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honorable. This is the same culture discussed in:

**3 Nephi 24**

**3** Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say: What have we spoken against thee?

**14** Ye have said: It is vain to serve God, and what doth it profit that we have kept his ordinances and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts?

**15** And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.

**Back to Isaiah 3 (2 Nephi 13)**

**6** When a man shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father, and shall say: Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler, and let not this ruin come under thy hand—

**7** In that day shall he swear, saying: I will not be a healer; for in my house there is neither bread nor clothing; make me not a ruler of the people.

**8** For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen, because their tongues and their doings have been against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory.

**(13-17) Isaiah 3:1–8. Prophetic Declaration of the Fall of Judah**

> The people would be so desperate for leadership that they would select rulers because they were able to dress decently, but even family leaders would refuse to help. The Book of Mormon provides textual clarification for verse 6, showing that the people pleaded that the ruler not let ruin come upon them (see 2 Nephi 13:6).
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 140)

**President Ezra Taft Benson**

> But there are some today who complain that the home evening manual should have been issued years ago. If this is true then the Lord will hold his servants accountable, but no one can say that from the inception of the Church up to the present day the Lord through his Spirit to the individual members and through his spokesmen the prophets, has not given us the objectives and plenty of guidelines and counsel. The fact that some of us have not done much about it even when it is spelled out in detail is not the Lord's fault.
>
> For years we have been counseled to have on hand a year's supply of food. Yet there are some today who will not start storing until the Church comes out with a detailed monthly home storage program. Now suppose that never happens. We still cannot say we have not been told.
>
> Should the Lord decide at this time to cleanse the Church—and the need for that cleansing seems to be increasing—a famine in this land of one year's duration could wipe out a large percentage of slothful members, including some ward and stake officers. Yet we cannot say we have not been warned.
>
> ("Not Commanded in All Things," *Conference Report,* April ***1965,*** pp. 121–125)

**President Marion G. Romney**

> We will see the day when we will live on what we produce.
>
> (*Conference Report,* April ***1975,*** p. 165)

**Matthew 25**

> **8** And the foolish said unto the wise, ***Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.***
>
> **9** But the wise answered, saying, ***Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.***
>
> **10** And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

There is a famine coming; it will make people desperate. So desperate that if you simply have clothing, people will assume you have food and will beg you to rule over them.

**Back to Isaiah 3 (2 Nephi 13)**

**9** The show of their countenance doth witness against them, and doth declare their sin to be even as Sodom, and they cannot hide it. Wo unto their souls, for they have rewarded evil unto themselves!

**10** Say unto the righteous that it is well with them; for they shall beat the fruit of their doings.

**11** Wo unto the wicked, for they shall perish; for the reward of their hands shall be upon them!

**(13-18) Isaiah 3:9. "The Shew of Their Countenance Doth Witness against Them"**

> The Book of Mormon clarifies the meaning of this significant verse (see 2 Nephi 13:9). Individuals radiate the quality of their spirit and attitude. They manifest the real person—good or evil. Isaiah warned that the disobedient cannot hide the effects of their transgressions from others.
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 140)

**Jude 1**

> **7** Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and ***going after strange flesh,*** are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was that of homosexuality. Simply put, Isaiah warned that homosexuals' countenances would declare their sin, and they would not be able to hide their homosexual behavior. Another important note is the difference in verse 11 between Isaiah and Nephi: Isaiah says that "the reward of his hands shall be given him," and the Book of Mormon says, "for the reward of their hands shall be ***upon them***." What was the reward of Sodom and Gomorrah? "Brimstone shall be ***upon them***." It is also interesting to note the contrast that Isaiah has laid out here between "the ***whole*** staff of bread, and the ***whole*** stay of water" (which includes righteous plural marriage) vs. that of sodomy. Have we fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy yet? How are we on our acceptance and teaching surrounding Celestial Plural Marriage vs. sodomy…? Once again, the wicked and the tares (which are bound together) can't help but fulfill prophecy!

**Back to Isaiah 3 (2 Nephi 13)**

**12** And my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they who lead thee cause thee to err and destroy the way of thy paths.

**2 Nephi 13:12. "Undermining of the Home and Family"**

> **Elder Ezra Taft Benson** saw the prophecy in 2 Nephi 13:12 as having a fulfillment in our own day: "And so today, the undermining of the home and family is on the increase, with the devil anxiously working to displace the father as the head of the home and create rebellion among the children. The Book of Mormon describes this condition when it states, 'And my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them.' And then these words follow—and consider these words seriously when you think of those political leaders who are promoting birth control and abortion: 'O my people, they who lead thee cause thee to err and destroy the way of thy paths.' (2 Ne. 13:12.)" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1970, p. 21).
>
> (*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (1996), PDF Version, p. 34)

This one is tough to unpack, not because it is difficult to understand, but because it will offend a lot of people. The Lord says here ***"my people"***—this is no longer referring to the USA or Washington DC; the Lord's people are covenant Israel, members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The second thing the Lord says is that "children are their oppressors," meaning having children is viewed as an oppression, or the children are so badly behaved that they oppress the parents. This is obviously not talking about spiritual oppression, but rather social and economical

oppression. They are not able to buy as fine things with more kids, they won't be able to go out to as many movies with more kids, etc.

The third thing the Lord says is that "the women rule over them," meaning single motherhood or married women who have removed their husbands as the head of the family. Ezra Taft Benson above said, "The devil is anxiously working ***to displace the father as the head of the home which creates rebellion among the children."*** Meaning, men are to be the head of the home, and the removing of them as head of the home creates the kind of children who "oppress" and who rebel. The Lord warns that there will come a time (already come) when single motherhood, as well as displaced fathers (in or out of their homes), will become rampant in the church.

The fourth and final thing the Lord says is "they who lead thee cause thee to err and destroy the way of thy paths." Erza Taft Benson identified these leaders as political leaders outside the church ***in his day*** (meaning Erza's) who would promote things such as the displacement of the father as the head of the home, single motherhood, birth control, abortion, etc. The Lord, however, makes it clear that there would come a point in time in which even some in leadership positions within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints would begin to promote such things. The Lord said ***"my people***... those who lead ***you."*** He was not referring to simply the government or political leaders. Members should be wary of *anyone,* leadership position in the church or not, who promotes the removal of the father as the *sole* head of the family, birth control, single motherhood (unnecessary divorce), abortion, etc.

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

> **51** And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; ***and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled;*** and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive trees.

**President Ezra Taft Benson**

> Now Satan is anxious to neutralize the inspired counsel of the Prophet and hence keep the priesthood off-balance, ineffective and inert in the fight for freedom. He does this through diverse means including the use of perverse reasoning.... Sometimes from behind the pulpit, in our classrooms, in our Council meetings and in our church publications we hear, read or witness things that do not square with the truth... Now do not let this serve as an excuse for your own wrong-doing. The Lord is letting the wheat and the tares mature before he fully purges the Church. He is also testing you to see if you will be misled.
>
> ("Our Immediate Responsibility," BYU Devotional, October 25, 1966)

**Back to Isaiah 3 (2 Nephi 13)**

**13** The Lord standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people.

**14** The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people and the princes thereof; for ye have eaten up the vineyard and the spoil of the poor in your houses.

**15** What mean ye? Ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor, saith the Lord God of Hosts.

**(13-19) Isaiah 3:14. Why Should the Lord Be Upset Because the People Have "Eaten Up the Vineyard"?**

> The vineyard is a symbol of the chosen people (see Isaiah 5:7), and the rulers of Israel were called to be watchmen over the vineyard. Instead of guarding the Lord's vineyard they had oppressed the people and consumed the vineyard (compare Matthew 21:33–40).
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 140)

**Matthew 21**

> **33** Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:
>
> **34** And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, ***that they might receive the fruits of it.***
>
> **35** And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.
>
> **36** Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.
>
> **37** But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.
>
> **38** But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, ***and let us seize on his inheritance.***
>
> **39** And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.
>
> **40** When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?
>
> **41** They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, ***and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.***
>
> **42** Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?
>
> **43** Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth ***the fruits thereof.***
>
> **44** And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.
>
> **45** And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, ***they perceived that he spake of them.***
>
> **46** But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.

**2 Nephi 10**

> **5** But because of ***priestcrafts*** and iniquities, they at Jerusalem will stiffen their necks against him, that he be crucified.
>
> **6** Wherefore, ***because of their iniquities,*** destructions, famines, pestilences, and bloodshed shall come upon them; and they who shall not be destroyed shall be scattered among all nations.

"Chosen people's" dualism would be the members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the dualism of "the rulers of Israel" would be those in leadership positions in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and in America. This is as clear cut an understanding of priestcraft as one will find... The rulers of Israel were called to be watchmen over the vineyard. The vineyard is a symbol of the Lord's chosen people (see Isaiah 5:7), but instead of guarding the Lord's vineyard they had oppressed the people and consumed the vineyard (compare Matthew 21:33–40), i.e. "they made a living off of them," they did it for the "gain." This is the "flaxen cord" that becomes strong cords, which bindeth forever! Instead of rehashing everything on priestcraft here again, see the applicable chapter in The Macro Last-day Timeline for a robust explanation and proving. Here is a quote from Hugh Nibley not contained in that chapter that explains what is going on here in Isaiah really well.

**Hugh Nibley**

> These two totally different views of private property are sharply contrasted in a case often brought to mind by Brigham Young in telling of the good Latter-day Saint businessman who buys a widow's only cow from her for five dollars "and then [goes] down on his knees and thank[s] God for his peculiar blessings to him." The widow's cow was truly her private property and by the law of Moses could not be taken from her. But Old Bessy was something wholly different to the man

who saw in her only an addition to his profits. He had no more personal interest, that "tenderness and affection" for one's own, than a dealer has for a thousand acres of canyon land (set aside by God as the proper sphere and element for his other creatures) that he bought last month, hoping to sell it next month to a Chicago syndicate or Arab oil emir for a neat profit. Such cannot be called private property at all.

But lunch is. In Israel every man received a plot of ground, assigned by lot, as his inalienable "inheritance"—it was his lunch and could never be taken from him, even because of debt. It was only as much land as he could "quicken" by his personal labor and loving attention, and no more. The same rule was observed in the settling of the Salt Lake Valley, where no man was allowed to buy and sell land or take more than he could cultivate. The small farm bestowed from tribal lands was also lunch and independence to the early Romans. But when the Conscript Fathers, claiming special privileges by divine decree for and by themselves, seized thousands of farms from the plebs to create their immense estates (the latifundia), as the English and Scottish lords did in the nineteenth-century Enclosure Movement, they forced the former owners either to stay on the land and go on working for them as serfs—for lunch only; or to move to the city, where the emperor, as God's vicar on earth, provided the famous "bread and circuses." The landlords, the industrialists of the time, did not contribute to the public lunch, the annona, which was a ritual and sacred affair, the food and lunch-tickets (tesserae hospitales) being actually showered from the skies by the emperor, acting as the kind and generous father of all. This should be noted here, because bread and circuses are routinely deplored as the cause of Rome's decline. What made them demoralizing was their secularization; in the later Rome, in which money was everything, nobody took the divine scheme of things seriously (see the Roman Satirists); lunch was lunch and nothing more. Rome's Zion passed away with Numa, the Roman Enoch. So once lunch was taken care of, the poor Roman had nothing to do but go to the shows and support the political candidates who spent the most on getting elected, while the rich enjoyed their notorious Roman banquets and the depraved pleasures that went with them. For without a sincere religious awareness, the free lunch corrupts rich and poor alike. It is the recognition of divine law that both sanctions and requires the free lunch for everybody.

The closing chapters of Deuteronomy describe point by point the calamities that will befall Israel if every item of the law is not scrupulously observed. It is the exact reverse of the list of blessings promised if the law is kept. And these terrible things are more than warnings; they are specific prophecies of just what is going to happen, and just what did happen to Israel, "because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things" (Deuteronomy 28:47). The identical situation obtains in the Book of Mormon.

(*Approaching Zion,* Chapter 8, pp. 221–223)

**Back to Isaiah 3 (2 Nephi 13)**

**16** Moreover, the Lord saith: Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet—

**17** Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts.

**18** In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments, and cauls, and round tires like the moon;

**19** The chains and the bracelets, and the mufflers;

**20** The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the ear-rings;

**21** The rings, and nose jewels;

**22** The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping-pins;

**23** The glasses, and the fine linen, and hoods, and the veils.

**24** And it shall come to pass, instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle, a rent; and instead of well set hair, baldness; and instead of a stomacher, a girding of sackcloth; burning instead of beauty.

**(13-20) Isaiah 3:16–24. The "Daughters of Zion" to Succumb to Worldliness in the Latter Days**

In these verses one can see a good example of dualism (see Enrichment E). Isaiah shows that the wickedness prevailing in Israel and Judah included the women, who were proud, arrogant, and more concerned with their clothing, jewels, and personal appearance than with righteousness. But these verses can also be applied in the latter day [Saints], when women will once more lose sight of proper priorities. President Joseph Fielding Smith said of this passage:

"Isaiah, one of the great prophets of early times, saw our day, and he described the conditions that would prevail among the 'daughters of Zion' in these latter days. …

"Now, in this modern day, Isaiah's prophecy has been and is being fulfilled. …

"The standards expressed by the General Authorities of the Church are that women, as well as men, should dress ***modestly.*** They are taught proper deportment and modesty at all times. It is, in my judgment, a sad reflection on the 'daughters of Zion' when they dress immodestly." (*Answers to Gospel Questions,* 5:172–74.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 140)

**(13-21) Isaiah 3:16–24. Difficult Idioms and Archaic Expressions**

The following explanations may be helpful in understanding the power of Isaiah's condemnation of the women's apostasy.

*Verse 16.* "Stretched forth necks" is an idiom describing haughtiness—pride in self and scorn toward others (see Young, *Book of Isaiah,* 1:162).

*Verse 16.* "Mincing … and making a tinkling with their feet." The women wore costly ornamental chains connecting rings about the ankles. These were often adorned with bells. (See Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary,* 7:1:143.)

*Verse 17.* "Discover their secret parts" is an idiom meaning that they would be put to shame (see Isaiah 3:17a).

*Verse 18.* "Cauls … round tires like the moon" were ornamental jewelry in the shape of suns and moons according to the fashions of that day (see Young, *Book of Isaiah,* 1:165).

*Verses 19–23.* These terms describe fashions that were popular among the worldly women in Isaiah's day: "muffler"—veil; "bonnet"—headdress; "tablets"—perfume boxes; "earrings"—charms or amulets; "nose jewels"—nose rings; "changeable suits of apparel"—clothing for festivals only; "mantle"—overcloak; "wimples"—a type of shawl or veil worn over the head; "crisping pins"—erroneously rendered as hair curling implements. The Hebrew suggests a bag, like modern purses or handbags; "glasses"—most authorities translate as a metal mirror, although some suggest transparent clothing, "hoods"—turbans, head cover wrapped by hand. (See Young, *Book of Isaiah,* 1:165–66; Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary,* 7:1:144–47.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), pp. 140–141)

**(13-22) Isaiah 3:24–26. The Fruits of Transgression upon the Daughters of Zion**

The prophet contrasts their former beauty with the results of judgment. Because of their wickedness, the beauty, the pride, and the fashion will become tragedy, disaster, and slavery. The girdle in verse 24 was the sash used to fasten the outer clothing. Keil and Delitzsch showed that

the "rent" which was to replace it was the rope used to bind slaves. Sackcloth was black goat's hair worn at times of great mourning. The "burning" refers to the branding that often accompanied one's being made a slave. Thus Keil and Delitzsch translated this verse: "And instead of balmy scent there will be mouldiness, and instead of the sash, a rope, and instead of artistic ringlets a baldness, and instead of the dress cloak a frock of sackcloth, branding instead of beauty" (*Commentary,* 7:1:147).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 141)

**(10-9) 2 Nephi 13:13–26**

If, indeed, Isaiah's words refer to the last days, we must look for a time when even some of the "daughters of Zion [or the children of Israel] are haughty, and walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes" (vs. 16). They will deck themselves in "tinkling ornaments" and the like (vs. 18), putting their trust in finery and wealth rather than in the Lord their God. Sometimes the phrase "daughters of Zion" (vs. 17) refers to the city of Judah. If so, they too were guilty of similar things.

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (1979), p. 91)

**President Wilford Woodruff**

There are some prophecies pertaining to these latter days that are unpleasant to contemplate. President Young has been calling upon the daughters of Zion day after day, now, for years, to lay aside these Babylonish fashions. I have been reading the third chapter of Isaiah, and I have been hoping, all the days of my ministry, that the sayings contained in that chapter would never apply to the daughters of Zion ***in our day;*** but I believe they will, and inasmuch as they will not listen to President Young and to the Prophets, Apostles and Elders of Israel with regard to throwing off these nonsensical things, I hope they will hasten the lengthening out of their skirts and drag them in the streets; that they will increase their round tires like the moon, increase their hoops, and their headbands, increase their Grecian bends at once and carry it out until they get through with it, so that we can turn to the Lord as a people. Some of the daughters of Zion do not seem willing to forsake the fashions of Babylon. I to such would say hasten it, and let the woe that is threatened on this account come, that we may get through with it, then we can go on and build up the Zion of God on the earth. But in spite of the follies that some among us delight in, we are going to build up Zion…

All these things have been spoken of and will be fulfilled; and by and by, when we are sanctified and made perfect, when we are chastised and humbled before the Lord, when we have got our eyes opened, and our hearts set upon building up the kingdom of God, then will we return and rebuild the waste places of Zion. We have got this to fulfill in our day and generation. Then think not, ye Elders of Israel, ye sons and daughters of Zion, that we are going to live after the order of Babylon always. We are not. We shall be chastised and afflicted, and shall feel the chastening rod of the Almighty, unless we serve the Lord our God, and build up his kingdom, for he has given us all power; yes, all power is given into our hands to perform this work.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 16, Discourse 37, p. 263)

**Back to Isaiah 3 (2 Nephi 13)**

**25** Thy men shall fall by the sword and thy mighty in the war.

**26** And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she shall be desolate, and shall sit upon the ground.

**Lamentations 1**

**4** The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness.

**5** Her adversaries are the chief, her enemies prosper; for the Lord hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions: her children are gone into captivity before the enemy.

**6** And from the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed: her princes are become like harts that find no pasture, and they are gone without strength before the pursuer.

Jeremiah in Lamentations Chapters 1–2 is talking about this exact same time period, and the footnotes confirm this. It is clear from these two chapters, and specifically these verses, that the war in which the men are falling is a spiritual war, for they cannot come to the solemn feasts ***and have gone without strength before the pursuer.*** Meaning a good chunk of the men's "hearts shall fail them," they will flee from the spiritual battle, apostatize from the church, and will thus be unable to go to the temple, solemn assembly, feasts, oblations, etc. (Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees). This is further confirmed by the women's feeling of "desolation"—if the men simply faithfully died in a physical war, why would there be such feelings of "desolation"? If these were women of faith, one would not expect such reactions from them… However, if these were men/sons/husbands who were lost spiritually? Well, then the mourning and lamentation and feelings of desolation begin to make sense…

**Back to Isaiah 3 (2 Nephi 13)**

**27** And in that day, seven women shall take hold of one man, saying: We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name to take away our reproach.

**(13-23) Isaiah 4:1. "Take Away Our Reproach"**

***Verse 1 of chapter four seems to continue the thought of chapter three rather than to begin a new thought.*** This phrase suggests that the condition mentioned in verse 1 ***is caused by the scarcity of men,*** a result of the devastation of war mentioned in Isaiah 3:25–26.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 141)

There are a lot of interpretations for this verse given and all of them save for one is incorrect. Period. If we do not start with understanding the verse's correct placement, we automatically will be in the "false interpretation" garbage pile.

What can help us further pare the large grouping of false interpretations down?

1. Isaiah is not talking about women generally, he is talking specifically about the daughters of Zion. This is made clear repeatedly throughout Isaiah chapter 3 as well as Lamentations chapters 1–2. Ergo, any interpretation of this verse that is not addressing these seven women ***as daughters of Zion*** can also be placed safely on the garbage pile.
2. These women have just been humbled by the Lord. Alma 32 teaches us that humility is synonymous with teachability. These women, unlike the men who have fallen spiritually, have remained faithful. However, they are desolate; which simply means without a husband and without children. Ergo, any interpretation that seeks to paint these women ***in a bad light*** can also be placed safely on the garbage pile.
3. Isaiah says "and in that day" meaning after the women in Zion are humbled and after the men have fallen in the spiritual war—***in that day,*** the daughters of Zion will cling to one man. And after all that, seven women collectively, as a group, will come up to one man to ask their question—it does not specify if this man is single or already married but we can infer ***that he is a righteous man in Zion.*** And why do we know this is a righteous man in Zion? Because the daughters of Zion would not have stayed true to the gospel, been humbled, and stayed within the gates only to ask a non-member to marry them—they are collectively clinging to this man ***because***

***of the scarcity of righteous men!*** Ergo, any interpretation that does not have the man being a righteous man in Zion can also be placed safely on the garbage pile.

4. If these daughters of Zion are humbled, faithful, and righteous, and the man (though scarcer in number) equally righteous, would they all desire an unrighteous and evil thing? If it was an unrighteous and evil thing, why would the women desire and ask for it? If it was an unrighteous and evil thing, why would they think that a righteous man would agree to it? Ergo, ***the question posed by the seven women to the man had to be a righteous question,*** and any interpretation that does not have that question being righteous can be placed safely on the garbage pile.
5. In order for it to be a righteous question, plural marriage has to be restored and practiced by the church, for as McConkie poignantly said, "all who pretend or assume to engage in plural marriage when the one holding the keys has withdrawn the power by which they are performed, are guilty of gross wickedness." Ergo, ***Celestial Plural Marriage has to be once again fully functional within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints before this event happens.***
6. The women stated that their sole objective in being sealed to the man was to take upon them the man's last name and thus to have their reproach taken away; it was not an economical arrangement. If the women were previously sealed to another man who died, would she have reproach? God forbid. This reproach is from a lack of Celestial Marriage and childbearing. This further drives home the point that these are daughters of Zion and not of the world, for women of the world hold no reproach for being single or childless. Why would Latter-day Saint women who are not sealed feel such a reproach? Exaltation in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom cannot be obtained without sealing, and the Lord himself taught "neither are they given or taken in marriage ***after the resurrection."*** What is the excuse or reason today that allows women today to not have that reproach of not being sealed? The answer? "There aren't any good men," i.e., "the scarcity of righteous men" which has already been identified here. However, when Celestial Plural Marriage comes back, the "reproach" no longer has a valid excuse or reason to be, and thus "seven women will take hold of one man"…

**Elder Orson Pratt**

> Inasmuch then as the Lord has promised to restore all things spoken of by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world began, supposing that he should begin this great work of restoration in our day, how are we going to help ourselves? I can't help it. Brigham Young, our President, can't help it; Joseph Smith could not help it. If God sees proper to accomplish this great work of restoration—the restitution of all things, it will include what the Prophet Moses has said, and it will bring back with it a plurality of wives. The 4th chapter of Isaiah could never be fulfilled without this restoration. The passage to which I refer is familiar to all the Latter-day Saints—"In that day the branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely; And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." Now will this prophecy ever be fulfilled, unless this great restoration or restitution shall take place? It cannot. If this great restitution does not take place, Jesus will never come, for it is written in the New Testament, in the 3rd chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, that "the heavens must receive Jesus Christ, until the times of the restitution of all things, which God has spoken by the mouths of his holy prophets since the world began." Jesus will have to stay a long time in the heavens providing that monogamist principles are the only principles that will be introduced, in fact he never can come, for the Scriptures say the heavens must retain him until all things are restored.
>
> God has said that seven women shall take hold of one man for the purpose of having their reproach taken away, that they may be called by his name, not cast off as harlots or prostitutes; not to take away the name of the father from the children, and cast them into the streets, as the Christian nations have been doing for many long centuries that are past. But these seven women will be desirous of having the name of their husband for themselves and their children. Isaiah says it shall be so, and it will have to be under the Christian dispensation. How are the Christians going to get rid of this? Can you devise any way? Is there any possible way or means that you can think of that will put a stop to the Lord's fulfilling his word? I will tell you one way—if you will all turn infidels and burn up the Bible, and then begin to persecute, the devil will tell you that you can successfully overcome, and that God will never fulfill and accomplish his word; but if you profess to believe the Bible, by the Bible you shall be judged, for, saith the Lord, "My words shall judge you at the last day." The books will be opened, God's word will be the standard by which the nations will be judged; hence if you wish a righteous judgment I would say—Forbear, do not destroy the Bible because it advocates polygamy; but remember that every word of God is pure, so it is declared; and he has nowhere in this book, condemned plural marriage, even in one instance.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 17, p. 214)

**Elder Orson Pratt**

> There must, however, be a restoration of the eternal covenant of marriage, and also of that order of marriage which existed among the old Patriarchs, before the prophecies can be fulfilled, wherein seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, "We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." That must be restored, or the prophecies of Isaiah never can be fulfilled.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 15, Discourse 8, p. 44)

**President George A. Smith**

> And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.
>
> In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.
>
> And it shall come to pass, that ***he that is left in Zion,*** and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, ***shall be called holy,*** even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem.
>
> The portion of the prophecy of Isaiah which I have read indicates that ***at a certain day and under certain circumstances, spoken of by the Prophet as being holy,*** seven women would claim to be called by the name of one man. Most of us have a different opinion with regard to the application of this prophecy. God inspired the Prophet, and it might be necessary, peradventure, to inquire what it all means. Seven women are to lay hold of one man, saying, "We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." What is the meaning of this last sentiment? … These passages [from the Bible regarding Rachel and Elizabeth] tell in so many plain words why it was that seven women wished to be called by the name of one man—***it was that they might have the privilege of bearing children."***
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 15, Discourse 6, p. 27)

## Isaiah Chapter Four (2 Nephi 14)

**Isaiah 4 (2 Nephi 14)**

*Zion and her daughters will be redeemed and cleansed in the millennial day.*

**2** In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious; the fruit of the earth excellent and comely to them that are escaped of Israel.

**2 Nephi 14:2. In That Day**

In Hebrew the term *branch* often symbolized the Messiah (see Jeremiah 23:5–6). It can also refer to righteous groups of the house of Israel who have been cleansed and redeemed (see Isaiah 60:21; 2 Nephi 3:5; 10:1; Jacob 2:25).

"Escaped of Israel" (2 Nephi 14:2) refers to members of the house of Israel who, through personal righteousness, escaped the judgments that came upon the wicked.

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

**Luke 21 (JST)**

**36** And what I say unto one, I say unto all: Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, and keep my commandments, ***that ye may be counted worthy to escape all these things,*** which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man when he shall come clothed in the glory of his Father.

**Elder Parley P. Pratt**

I have already been lengthy; having got at the main review, I will close by reviewing one more sentence. "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

Now I know the habit of praying always in Christendom, that is certain portions of them, they pray in their families and in secret, and have prayer meetings; they pray for this, that, and the other, and say the Lord's prayer and a great many prayers, but the question is do they pray always? He did not tell them to pray the Lord's prayer always, particularly, neither did he tell not to; but this one prayer he did tell them to pray always, and causes it to be written; do WE fulfil it, and do they; it is not to pray always nor to watch always, but it is to pray this particular prayer always—that we may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass and stand before the Son of Man.

Whatever else they might pray in all the varying circumstances of their lives, all right, but this one thing they would be sure to need, to be accounted worthy to escape all those things Christ foretold, and stand before him.

("Literal Fulfillment of Prophecy, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses,* Volume 3, p. 127)

**Elder Heber C. Kimball**

Before that day comes, however, the Saints will be put to a test that will try the integrity of the best of them. The pressure will become so great ***that the more righteous among them will cry unto the Lord day and night until deliverance comes...***

[For] the time is coming when we will be mixed up in these now peaceful valleys to that extent that it will be difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God. Then, brethren, look out for the great sieve, for there will be a great sifting time, and many will fall; for I say unto you there is a test, a Test, a TEST coming, and who will be able to stand? This church has before it many close places through which it must pass before the work of God is crowned with victory. To meet the difficulties that are coming it will be necessary for you to have knowledge of the truth of this work for yourselves. The difficulties will be of such character that the man or woman who does not possess this personal knowledge or witness will fall. If you have not got the testimony, live right and call upon the Lord and cease not 'till you obtain it. If you do not, you will not stand... Then the Prophet Joseph and others will make their appearance and ***those who have remained faithful will be selected to return to Jackson County, Missouri and take part in the building of that beautiful city, the New Jerusalem.***

(May 1868, in *Deseret News,* 23 May 1931; see also *Conference Report,* Oct. 1930, p. 58–59; Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball,* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1945, p. 446, Smith, Robert W. and Elisabeth A., *Scriptural and Secular Prophecies Pertaining to The Last Days,* Ninth Edition, Pyramid Press, SLC, UT, 1947, pp. 134–138; *Deseret News,* May 23, 1931; W. Cleon Skousen, *Prophecy and Modern Times,* pp. 31–33, *An Army of Elders,* May 1868, Heber C. Kimball Reported by his son J. Golden Kimball, CR October 1930, p. 58. See also Prophetic Sayings of Heber C. Kimball to Sister Amanda H. Wilcox)

**Elder L. Tom Perry**

The people of Alma were ***delivered*** from the hands of the Lamanites and ***safely*** made their way back to be united with the people of Zarahemla.

What was the difference between the people of Alma and the people of King Limhi? Obviously, there were several differences: the people of Alma were peaceful and more righteous; they had already been baptized and entered into a covenant with the Lord; ***they humbled themselves before the Lord even before their tribulations started.*** All these differences made it appropriate and fair that the Lord would ***deliver*** them quickly in a miraculous way from the hand which kept them in bondage. These scriptures teach us of ***the Lord's power of deliverance.***

("The Power of Deliverance," General Conference, April 2012)

Once again, this is a topic which took up an entire chapter (Disobedience Necessitates Suffering), so to keep myself from being too redundant, check out that chapter in The Macro Last-day Timeline to expand upon this concept to its fullest.

**Back to Isaiah 4 (2 Nephi 14)**

**3** And it shall come to pass, they that are left in Zion and remain in Jerusalem shall be called holy, every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem—

The footnote for the scripture takes you to **Matthew 13:41-43**.

**41** The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

**42** And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

**43** Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

This is how the wicked are weeded out, also known as the wheat and the tares.

**Joseph Smith** described how the righteous will be gathered at this time.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed. The mustard seed is small, but brings forth a large tree, and the fowls lodge in the branches. The fowls are the angels. Thus angels come down, combine together to gather their children, and gather them. We cannot be made perfect without them, nor they without us; when these things are done, the Son of Man will descend, the Ancient of Days sit; we may come to an innumerable company of angels, have communion with and receive instruction from them.

("We Cannot be Perfect Without Our Dead," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 159)

"They that remain," once again, is a reference to just how few there are left who are truly righteous.

**Back to Isaiah 4 (2 Nephi 14)**

**4** When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning.

**(13-25) Isaiah 4:4. "Washed … Purged … Burning"**

This passage describes the purification of Zion in preparation for the establishment of God's kingdom in the last days (see also Isaiah 4:4a). Through chastisement and various judgments, Israel will finally be purged of wickedness and turn back to God (compare Isaiah 5:16; Zechariah 13:9; Helaman 12:1–3).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 141)

This "purification of Zion" is also described in **Malachi 3:1–3** and **3 Nephi 24:1–3**:

**1** Thus said the Father unto Malachi—Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.

**2** But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap.

**3** And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

In order to understand what is happening in these verses, you need to first understand what **Joseph Smith** taught:

We consider that God has created man with a mind capable of instruction, and a faculty which may be enlarged in proportion to the heed and diligence given to the light communicated from heaven to the intellect; and that the nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, till he has overcome the evils of his life and lost every desire for sin and like the ancients, arrives at that point of faith where is his wrapped in the power and glory of his Maker and is caught up to dwell with Him. …

There are two Comforters spoken of. One is the Holy Ghost, the same as given on the day of Pentecost, and that all Saints receive after faith, repentance, and baptism. This first Comforter or Holy Ghost has no other effect than pure intelligence. It is more powerful in expanding the mind, enlightening the understanding, and storing the intellect with present knowledge, of a man who is of the literal seed of Abraham, than one that is a Gentile, though it may not have half as much visible effect upon the body; for as the Holy Ghost falls upon one of the literal seed of Abraham, it is calm and serene; and his whole soul and body are only exercised by the pure spirit of intelligence; while the effect of the Holy Ghost upon a Gentile, is to purge out the old blood, and make him actually of the seed of Abraham. That man that has none of the blood of Abraham (naturally) must have a new creation by the Holy Ghost. In such a case, there may be more of a powerful effect upon the body, and visible to the eye, than upon an Israelite, while the Israelite at first might be far before the Gentile in pure intelligence.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 51, 149–150)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

Noah came before the flood. I have come before the fire.

(Report of President Snow under entry of January 1, 1892, in diary of Abraham H. Cannon, vol. 16, p. 30)

**Back to Isaiah 4 (2 Nephi 14)**

**5** And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory of Zion shall be a defence.

**6** And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and a covert from storm and from rain.

**(10-10) 2 Nephi 14: 1–6**

Isaiah here foresees a time when God will "have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion" (vs. 4). This seems to be the time of restitution for the house of Israel, the day when Israel shall again find in the Lord "a place of refuge, and a covert from storm and from rain" (vs. 6).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (1979), p. 91)

**(13-26) Isaiah 4:5–6. Zion to Be a Place of Refuge**

In Doctrine and Covenants 45:66–72, the sacred and protected status of "Zion" for the gathered Israel in the latter days is described. Doctrine and Covenants 105:31–32 speaks of how the glory of Zion shall be her defense. Isaiah compared the protecting divine influence with that experienced by Moses (see Exodus 14:19–20; Deuteronomy 1:33). Elder Orson Pratt suggested that the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy would be literal:

"The time is to come when God will meet with all the congregation of his Saints, and to show his approval, and that he does love them, he will work a miracle by covering them in the cloud of his glory. I do not mean something that is invisible, but I mean that same order of things which once existed on the earth so far as the tabernacle of Moses was concerned, which was carried in the midst of the children of Israel as they journeyed in the wilderness. … But in the latter days there will be people so pure in Mount Zion, with a house established upon the tops of the mountains, that God will manifest himself, not only in their Temple and upon all their assemblies, with a visible cloud during the day, but when the night shall come, if they shall be assembled for worship, God will meet with them by his pillar of fire; and when they retire to their habitations, behold each habitation will be lighted up by the glory of God,—a pillar of flaming fire by night.

"Did you ever hear of any city that was thus favored and blessed since the day that Isaiah delivered this prophecy? No, it is a latter-day work, one that God must consummate in the latter times when he begins to reveal himself, and show forth his power among the nations." (In *Journal of Discourses,* 16:82.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 141)

**Elder Orson Pratt**

And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion and upon her assemblies a cloud and smoke by day, and shining, flaming fire by night; and upon all the glory shall be a defense and there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge and for a covert from storm and from rain. ***How often I have quoted this passage! I am not tired of quoting it yet. It is among the great events of the latter days; it is among those marvels and wonders that are just at hand.*** A Zion to be built up; a city of Zion having habitations, and upon these habitations a supernatural light by night, and a supernatural cloud by day. No such event has happened since this prophecy was uttered by the Prophet Isaiah, it remains to be fulfilled in the latter days.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 14, p. 343)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

But, my dear brothers and sisters, so many wonderful things are ahead. In coming days, we will see ***the greatest manifestations of the Savior's power that the world has ever seen.*** Between now and the time He returns "with power and great glory," He will bestow countless privileges, blessings, and miracles upon the faithful.

("Overcome the World and Find Rest," General Conference, October 2022)

# Isaiah 5–6, 2 Nephi 15–16

## Isaiah Chapter 5 (2 Nephi 15)

**Isaiah 5 (2 Nephi 15)**

*The Lord's vineyard (Israel) will become desolate, and His people will be scattered—Woes will come upon them in their apostate and scattered state—The Lord will lift an ensign and gather Israel.*

**1** And then will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved, touching his vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill.

**2** And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a wine-press therein; and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

**3** And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.

**4** What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes it brought forth wild grapes.

**5** And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard—I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and I will break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down;

**6** And I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

**7** For the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant; and he looked for judgment, and behold, oppression; for righteousness, but behold, a cry.

**(13-27) Isaiah 5:1–7. Isaiah's Parable of the Vineyard**

The prophet used the parable of the vineyard to illustrate the impending destruction and scattering of Israel (Judah). For additional examples of similar applications of this parable see James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ,* pp. 541–42.

The loss of protection for the vineyard, the neglect, and the effects of famine would result from Israel's transgression (see v. 5–7).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 141)

Once again, with dualism, Judah is Ephraim and Israel is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Ephraimite countries. Isaiah talks more specifically of the walls of protection coming down for Ephraim in later chapters (e.g., Isaiah 28), but this is such an important topic it has to be addressed here as well. This ties directly into the parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees (D&C 101) as well as the Allegory of the Olive Tree (Jacob 5). For a more complete breakdown of those, see the applicable chapters in The Macro Last-day Timeline.

**Jacob 5**

**46** And now, behold, notwithstanding all the care which we have taken of my vineyard, the trees thereof have become corrupted, that they bring forth no good fruit; and these I had hoped to preserve, to have laid up fruit thereof against the season, unto mine own self. But, behold, they have become like unto the wild olive tree, and they are of no worth but to be hewn down and cast into the fire; and it grieveth me that I should lose them.

**47** But what could I have done more in my vineyard? Have I slackened mine hand, that I have not nourished it? Nay, I have nourished it, and I have digged about it, and I have pruned it, and I have dunged it; and I have stretched forth mine hand almost all the day long, and the end draweth nigh. And it grieveth me that I should hew down all the trees of my vineyard, and cast them into the fire that they should be burned. Who is it that has corrupted my vineyard?

**48** And it came to pass that the servant said unto his master: Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard—have not the branches thereof overcome the roots which are good? And because the branches have overcome the roots thereof, behold they grew faster than the strength of the roots, taking strength unto themselves. Behold, I say, is not this the cause that the trees of thy vineyard have become corrupted?

**62** Wherefore, let us go to and labor with our might this last time, for behold the end draweth nigh, and this is for the last time that I shall prune my vineyard.

**63** Graft in the branches; begin at the last that they may be first, and that the first may be last, and dig about the trees, both old and young, the first and the last; and the last and the first, that all may be nourished once again for the last time.

**70** And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard sent his servant; and the servant went and did as the Lord had commanded him, and brought other servants; and they were few.

**71** And the Lord of the vineyard said unto them: Go to, and labor in the vineyard, with your might. For behold, this is the last time that I shall nourish my vineyard; for the end is nigh at hand, and the season speedily cometh; and if ye labor with your might with me ye shall have joy in the fruit which I shall lay up unto myself against the time which will soon come.

**72** And it came to pass that the servants did go and labor with their mights; and the Lord of the vineyard labored also with them; and they did obey the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard in all things.

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**43** And now, I will show unto you a parable, that you may know my will concerning the redemption of Zion.

**44** A certain nobleman had a spot of land, very choice; and he said unto his servants: Go ye unto my vineyard, even upon this very choice piece of land, and plant twelve olive trees;

**45** And set watchmen round about them, and build a tower, that one may overlook the land round about, to be a watchman upon the tower, that mine olive trees may not be broken down when the enemy shall come to spoil and take upon themselves the fruit of my vineyard.

**46** Now, the servants of the nobleman went and did as their lord commanded them, and planted the olive trees, and built a hedge round about, and set watchmen, and began to build a tower.

**47** And while they were yet laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves: And what need hath my lord of this tower?

**48** And consulted for a long time, saying among themselves: What need hath my lord of this tower, seeing this is a time of peace?

**49** Might not this money be given to the exchangers? For there is no need of these things.

**50** And while they were at variance one with another they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord.

**51** And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive trees.

**55** And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are

> of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;
>
> **56** And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard; for it is mine

These verses in Isaiah make it clear that it is the Lord who is dropping the protective hedge (which will become clearer in later Isaiah chapters) because of our neglect towards "the tower" and our love of money, which allows "the Destroyer" to come in and damage the olive trees. Tying Doctrine and Covenants 101 and Jacob 5 together, it becomes clear that the "few servants" who work to save the trees are sent back at the redemption of Zion (verses 55–56) and work from that time forward. Coming back to that last line from the student manual above:

> The loss of protection for the vineyard, the neglect, and the effects of famine would result from Israel's transgression (see v. 5–7).

So Israel loses the protection for the vineyard (i.e., the hedge drops) because of neglect towards the tower ("Israel's transgression") and feels the effects of a famine… Once again, pay close attention to these themes because they will crop up time and time again:

1. Neglect towards the tower, which is the failure to redeem Zion and build the New Jerusalem ("Israel's transgression")
2. The Lord lowers his protection, i.e., "the hedge" is destroyed
3. The Destroyer/The Assyrian/The Gadianton Robbers/etc. (different names for the same latter-day entity) damage the olive trees
4. The return of Joseph Smith, Redemption of Zion, etc.
5. The famine

**Ether 13**

> **6** And that a New Jerusalem should be built up upon this land, unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph, for which things there has been a type.
>
> **7** For as Joseph brought his father down into the land of Egypt, even so he died there; wherefore, the Lord brought a remnant of the seed of Joseph out of the land of Jerusalem, that he might be merciful unto the seed of Joseph that they should perish not, even as he was merciful unto the father of Joseph that he should perish not.
>
> **8** Wherefore, the remnant of the house of Joseph shall be built upon this land; and it shall be a land of their inheritance; and they shall build up a holy city unto the Lord, like unto the Jerusalem of old; and they shall no more be confounded, until the end come when the earth shall pass away.
>
> **13** And I was about to write more, but I am forbidden…

And that ties us perfectly into a proper understanding of Jesus' Macro Last-day Timeline as taught by himself, comprising 3 Nephi chapters 20–26, even down to Mormon being commanded, once again, to not spell everything out, but test the faith of the Gentiles (Ether 4) and that veil of unbelief. The famine that Joseph in Egypt experiences was simply a type and shadow of ***"the*** famine" that is to take place during this exact time. We get into that famine much more specifically in Isaiah chapter 18 with the "hailstorm," etc.

**Back to Isaiah 5 (2 Nephi 15)**

> **8** Wo unto them that join house to house, till there can be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!
>
> **9** In mine ears, said the Lord of Hosts, of a truth many houses shall be desolate, and great and fair cities without inhabitant.
>
> **10** Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of a homer shall yield an ephah.

**(13-28) Isaiah 5:8–25. Warning of the Consequences of Apostasy and Transgression**

> After the parable that introduces this chapter, the prophet Isaiah gave many examples of the wickedness of the people of his day.
>
> *Verse 8.* They built up great estates through wickedness. Keil and Delitzsch explained: "'They, the insatiable, would not rest till, after every smaller piece of landed property had been swallowed by them, the whole land had come into their possession, and no one beside themselves was settled in the land' [Job 22:8]. Such covetousness was all the more reprehensible, because the law of Israel had provided so very stringently and carefully, that as far as possible there should be an equal distribution of the soil, and that hereditary family property should be inalienable." (*Commentary,* 7:1:166.)
>
> An *acre* is the amount a yoke of oxen could plow in a day. A *bath* is about 5.5 gallons. A homer is about 6.5 bushels, and an *ephah* is one tenth of a homer. These measurements show how unproductive the land would become because of this wickedness.
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), pp. 141–142)

In verse 8, the wickedness described here is greed tied to "gain," in which corporations and globalism consume and destroy small businesses, nationalism and hereditary family property. The transgression/neglect of Israel is made manifest in their selling of their farms (inheritance) to live deliciously in Babylon, in houses "joined house to house."

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** taught:

> As the Saints of the Most High we shall strive to "stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world" (D&C 78:14). Our only hope is to free ourselves from the bondage of sin, to rid ourselves from the chains of darkness, to rise above the world, to live godly and upright lives.
>
> Relying always on the Lord, we must become independent of the world. We must be self-reliant. Using the agency God has given us, we must work out our own economic and temporal problems. …
>
> We must maintain our own health, sow our own gardens, store our own food, educate and train ourselves to handle the daily affairs of life. No one else can work out our salvation for us, either temporally or spiritually.
>
> We are here on earth to care for the needs of our family members. Wives have claim on their husbands for their support, children upon their parents, parents upon their children, brothers upon each other, and relatives upon their kin.
>
> It is the aim of the Church to help the Saints to care for themselves and, where need be, to make food and clothing and other necessities available, lest the Saints turn to the doles and evils of Babylon. To help care for the poor among them the Church must operate farms, grow vineyards, run dairies, manage factories, and ten thousand other things—all in such a way as to be independent of the powers of evil in the world.
>
> We do not say that all of the Saints will be spared and saved from the coming day of desolation. But we do say there is no promise of safety and no promise of security except for those who love the Lord and who are seeking to do all that he commands. …
>
> And so we raise the warning voice and say: Take heed; prepare; watch and be ready. There is no security in any course except the course of obedience and conformity and righteousness.
>
> For thus saith the Lord: "The Lord's scourge shall pass over by night and by day, and the report thereof shall vex all people; yea, it shall not be stayed until the Lord come; …
>
> "Nevertheless, Zion shall escape if she observe to do all things whatsoever I have commanded her," saith the Lord.
>
> "But if she observe not to do whatsoever I have commanded her, I will visit her according to all her works, with sore affliction, with pestilence,

with plague, with sword, with vengeance, with devouring fire." (D&C 97:23, 25–26.)

("Stand Independent above All Other Creatures," General Conference, April 1979)

**Luke 15**

**11** ¶ And he said, A certain man had two sons:

**12** And the younger of them said to his father, Father, ***give me the portion of goods which falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.*** (i.e. he sold the farm and took the money)

**13** And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, ***and there wasted his substance with riotous living.*** (Revelation 18:7)

**14** And when he had spent all, ***there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.***

**15** And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

**16** And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks which the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him.

**17** And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

**18** I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

**19** And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

I feel thankful that there have no more denied the faith; I pray God in the name of Jesus that you all may be kept in the faith unto the end: let your sufferings be what they may, it is better in the eyes of God that you should die, than that you should give up the land of Zion, the inheritances which you have purchased with your moneys; for every man that giveth not up his inheritance, though he should die, yet, when the Lord shall come, he shall stand upon it, and with Job, in his flesh he shall see God. Therefore, this is my counsel, that you retain your lands, even unto the uttermost, and employ every lawful means to seek redress of your enemies; and pray to God, day and night, to return you in peace and in safety to the lands of your inheritance: and when the judge fail you, appeal unto the executive; and when the executive fail you, appeal unto the president; and when the president fail you, and all laws fail you, and the humanity of the people fail you, and all things else fail you but God alone, and you continue to weary Him with your importunings, as the poor woman did the unjust judge, He will not fail to execute judgment upon your enemies, and to avenge His own elect that cry unto Him day and night.

Behold, He will not fail you! He will come with ten thousand of His Saints, and all His adversaries shall be destroyed with the breath of His lips! All those who keep their inheritances, notwithstanding they should be beaten and driven, shall be likened unto the wise virgins who took oil in their lamps. But all those who are unbelieving and fearful, will be likened unto the foolish virgins, who took no oil in their lamps: and when they shall return and say unto the Saints, Give us of your lands—behold, there will be no room found for them. As respects giving deeds, I would advise you to give deeds as far as the brethren have legal and just claims for them, and then let every man answer to God for the disposal of them.

("The Value of an Inheritance," *TPJS,* pp. 35–36)

We were told to "build the tower"; we were told to farmstead, to stand independent… but we wanted to "spend the money elsewhere" (D&C 101:49). So we sold our orchards, we sold our farms, etc., and we moved into cities to live "house to house… deliciously in Babylon… wasting our substance with riotous living," and it will require ***"the*** famine," i.e., "a ***seven year*** famine" to get us, the majority of the church as prodigal sons, to repent and come back… and us "coming back" will be just like the prodigal son, just like those who bent the knee to Joseph in Egypt during those seven years of famine… and this is how the New Jerusalem will be built. We don't want to be the prodigal son, we want to be the good son who "kept the farm" and prepared for the famine like we have been commanded by God to do.

In verse 9, the Lord says because of these things cities will be made desolate, and in verse 10, things will be less productive. In D&C 45:31 it says, "for an overflowing scourge (whip) shall cover the earth, for (because) a desolating sickness shall sweep the land." COVID–19 swept the earth and was able to sweep the earth only because of globalism, corporatism and open borders. The overflowing scourge (whip) is that of the corporations, globalism, New World Order seizing power and utterly crushing what is left of nationalism, small businesses, hereditary family properties, etc. In other words, "you will own nothing, and be happy." Isaiah in later chapters identifies the leader of the overflowing scourge as "the Assyrian," the Book of Mormon identifies those men as "Gadianton robbers," and the Lord in the Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees simply calls him "the destroyer."

**Back to Isaiah 5 (2 Nephi 15)**

**11** Wo unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink, that continue until night, and wine inflame them!

**12** And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands.

**(13-28) Isaiah 5:8–25. Warning of the Consequences of Apostasy and Transgression**

*Verse 11.* Drunkenness and partying prevail, with no regard for God.

*Verse 12.* There is no knowledge of truth and true principles. Ignorance is a hindrance in any field of endeavor, but especially in spiritual things. The Prophet Joseph Smith gave instruction on this important principle: "The Church must be cleansed, and I proclaim against all iniquity. A man is saved no faster than he gets knowledge, for if he does not get knowledge, he will be brought into captivity by some evil power in the other world, as evil spirits will have more knowledge, and consequently more power than many men who are on the earth. Hence it needs revelation to assist us, and give us knowledge of the things of God." (*Teachings,* p. 217.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 142)

These verses describe Ephraim in their drunken state, eating too much, living riotously from sunup to sundown, but who have no intention of living as the Lord commanded. The solution to the problem is knowledge, but the problem as we have already discussed in previous Isaiah chapters is that those who were set to be watchmen, those who were set apart to warn and teach the people, have instead taken to "eating up the vineyard," engaging in priestcraft and teaching naught but what the people want to hear (Helaman 13).

**Back to Isaiah 5 (2 Nephi 15)**

**13** Therefore, my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge; and their honorable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.

**14** Therefore, hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure; and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

The footnote for verse 13 takes you to TG Spiritual Bondage. Once again, confirming that the men of Zion, "my people," will be lost in a spiritual war, not a physical war. This scripture however gives us a further explanation as to why they have perished in this spiritual war—that is

due to being "famished." We learn from the previous verse what the honorable men are famished from is knowledge. And in Isaiah chapter 3 we learn why these men are not given the spiritual knowledge they need to succeed—"and women did rule over them," women that seek to remove the man as the spiritual head of the family while prioritizing worldliness and materialism. This only further feeds into men forgoing their responsibilities as watchman, instead focusing on gain to support the lifestyles and desires of the women. Israel will become so polluted that it will be taught that it is a man's job/role to sustain and support such lifestyles, and the selling of God's very own words for gain will not be off the table in such pursuits…

This is what creates the culture and spiritual slaughter in which the daughters of Zion will find their sons, their men, ***dead*** in the spiritual war, and they will sit on the ground desolate. Verse 14 states that anyone who rejoices in these things, rejoices in these progressive changes, etc., will fall into the ever-enlarging pit of hell.

**Back to Isaiah 5 (2 Nephi 15)**

**15** And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled.

**16** But the Lord of Hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.

Verses 15 and 16 once again are hearkening back to the theme of people being humbled and the Lord Himself being the only one exalted in his day.

**Back to Isaiah 5 (2 Nephi 15)**

**17** Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat.

Verse 17 contrasts the lambs "which shall be fed after their manner," meaning their specific needs are taken care of, versus the fat ones' waste places (the wasted husbands/men) which shall be eaten up by strangers. The following verses do a good job contrasting these different groups and prevalent cultures:

**3 Nephi 24**

**8** Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say: Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

**9** Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

**10** Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house; and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

**11** And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the fields, saith the Lord of Hosts.

**12** And all nations shall call you blessed, for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of Hosts.

**13** Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say: What have we spoken against thee?

**14** Ye have said: It is vain to serve God, and what doth it profit that we have kept his ordinances and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts?

**15** And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.

**16** Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

**17** And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

**18** Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

**Back to Isaiah 5 (2 Nephi 15)**

**18** Wo unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope;

**19** That say: Let him make speed, hasten his work, that we may see it; and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it.

**2 Nephi 15:18, 20–21. Warnings against Sin**

In 2 Nephi 15:18 the effects of sin are compared to "a cart rope." People guilty of sin are like those who "are tied to their sins like beasts to their burdens [or oxen to their carts]" (Isaiah 5:18c).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

The "draw" in verse 18 in Hebrew is "to entice or pull."

Footnote 19c says "TG Sign Seekers," i.e., they will not believe until they see. Because verse 19 describes the sinners as sign seekers, we know at least one sin they are suffering from—adultery. The Lord himself as well as Joseph Smith clearly set forth that sign seekers are those in the sin of adultery (Matt. 12:39, 16:4; *TPJS* p. 156–157). With this clarification we can better understand the verses, as sexual sins are known to "entice or pull one in" with the appearance or physical beauty of another; these sins and carnal desires can tie the individual up like a beast to their burdens. The grouping of these verses also give the spiritually attuned Latter-day Saints an understanding of why there is such a prevalence of those sins at that time, both in the world and in the church—"and their honorable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst… the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat."

**Back to Isaiah 5 (2 Nephi 15)**

**20** Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil, that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

**2 Nephi 15:18, 20–21. Warnings against Sin**

**President James E. Faust** (1920–2007) of the First Presidency described the importance of clearly seeing and choosing right from wrong: "The gap between what is popular and what is righteous is widening. As prophesied by Isaiah, many today 'call evil good, and good evil' [Isaiah 5:20]. Revelations from the prophets of God are not like offerings at the cafeteria, some to be selected and others disregarded" (in Conference Report, Oct. 2003, 21; or *Ensign,* Nov. 2003, 22).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

**(13-28) Isaiah 5:8–25. Warning of the Consequences of Apostasy and Transgression**

*Verse 20.* They pervert righteousness and goodness, calling them evil, and try to pass off evil things as good. It is the nature of sinners to reject the reality of the consequences of their transgressions, and so they attempt to explain them away.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 142)

There seems to be a lot of members today who "believe the church to be true but…" and then they will list some progressive viewpoint they wish the church would adopt. As Faust said, the church is not a smorgasbord—it is all true or none of it is true.

**Back to Isaiah 5 (2 Nephi 15)**

**21** Wo unto the wise in their own eyes and prudent in their own sight!

**(13-28) Isaiah 5:8–25. Warning of the Consequences of Apostasy and Transgression**

*Verse 21.* They are "wise in their own eyes." **President N. Eldon Tanner** illustrated the necessity of heeding this warning. He noted that when people "become learned in the worldly things such as science and philosophy, [they] become self-sufficient and are prepared to lean unto their own understanding, even to the point where they think they are independent of God; and because of their worldly learning they feel that if they cannot prove physically, mathematically, or scientifically that God lives, they can and should feel free to question and even to deny God and Jesus Christ. Then many of our professors begin to teach perverse things, to lead away disciples after them; and our youth whom we send to them for learning accept them as authority, and many are caused to lose their faith in God. …

"How much wiser and better it is for man to accept the simple truths of the gospel and to accept as authority God, the Creator of the world, and his Son Jesus Christ, and to accept by faith those things which he cannot disprove and for which he cannot give a better explanation. He must be prepared to acknowledge that there are certain things—many, many things—that he cannot understand." (In Conference Report, Oct. 1968, pp. 48–49.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 142)

Priestcraft, those who are "wise in their own eyes," following their own "spirit-o-meters," etc. who preach against following God and who get gain while doing so… And mark well, to ignore the prophet of God is to ignore God!

**Doctrine and Covenants 1**

**14** And the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, shall be cut off from among the people;

**15** For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant;

**16** They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.

**Doctrine and Covenants 21**

**4** Wherefore, meaning the church, thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me;

**5** For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith.

Such individuals who, after having received the gift of the Holy Ghost, lead souls away from Christ will become Sons of Perdition.

**President Joseph Fielding Smith**

BLASPHEMY AGAINST JESUS CHRIST

A man who has not received the gift of the Holy Ghost and therefore who has never "tasted of the heavenly gift," may be guilty of blasphemy against Jesus Christ and be forgiven on his repentance, but so great is the testimony through the gift of the Holy Ghost, should he turn against the Lord and fight his work, there is no forgiveness. The shedding of innocent blood is not confined to taking lives of the innocent, but is also included in seeking to destroy the word of God, and putting Christ to open shame. Those who have known the truth and then fight against the authorized servants of Jesus Christ also fight against him, for they who fight against his servants also do it unto him, and thus are guilty of his blood.

(*Answers to Gospel Questions*)

**Back to Isaiah 5 (2 Nephi 15)**

**22** Wo unto the mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink;

**Proverbs 31**

**3** Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.

**4** It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink:

**5** Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.

Same themes… Women ruling over, being drunk in Babylon, failing at being a watchman, etc.

**Back to Isaiah 5 (2 Nephi 15)**

**23** Who justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

**(13-28) Isaiah 5:8–25. Warning of the Consequences of Apostasy and Transgression**

*Verse 23.* They "justify the wicked for reward." Those who were guilty of crimes were declared innocent by bribed judges and other officials, whereas the innocent were found guilty so that they could be silenced or their property exploited. Obviously the dark evils that prevailed among the Israelites of the ancient kingdom of Judah help modern readers understand why the judgments of God come upon them. But today's world can also learn a great lesson, for one need only look to see the same evils prevailing on many sides. The effects of sin today are as devastating as they were anciently. That is the message of Isaiah for today.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 142)

This is a direct tie in to 3 Nephi 24, which we have already referenced above.

**Back to Isaiah 5 (2 Nephi 15)**

**24** Therefore, as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, their root shall be rottenness, and their blossoms shall go up as dust; because they have cast away the law of the Lord of Hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

**2 Nephi 20**

**17** And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame, and shall burn and shall devour his thorns and his briers in one day

**Obadiah 1**

**16** For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been.

**17** ¶ But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.

**18** And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them,

and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the LORD hath spoken it.

**(25-29) Obadiah 1:16–21. A Day of Deliverance and Rejoicing**

These verses have both a temporal and a spiritual meaning for Latter-day Saints. If Esau (Edom) represents the worldly wicked, these verses may be seen as referring to that day when Israel will be completely restored and evil eliminated. Mount Zion, a symbol for deliverance and holiness (see v. 17), will be the inheritance of the "house of Jacob," whereas the "house of Esau" will be stubble, fit only to be burned. The "house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame … and they shall kindle in them [Esau], and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau" (v. 18). Eventually, "saviors shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord's" (v. 21).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 259)

**Back to Isaiah 5 (2 Nephi 15)**

**25** Therefore, is the anger of the Lord kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them; and the hills did tremble, and their carcasses were torn in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

**26** And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth; and behold, they shall come with speed swiftly; none shall be weary nor stumble among them.

**27** None shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken;

**28** Whose arrows shall be sharp, and all their bows bent, and their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind, their roaring like a lion.

**29** They shall roar like young lions; yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and shall carry away safe, and none shall deliver.

**30** And in that day they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea; and if they look unto the land, behold, darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.

The Lord's anger is "kindled against ***his*** people." He then says he will cause "their carcasses to be torn in the midst of the streets." We already know from previous Isaiah chapters that when the Lord comes to purify, He will start first with ***His*** church. The Lord here, however, is referring to carcasses, plural. What are these?

**Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:27; Matthew 24:28. "Wheresoever the Carcass Is, There Will the Eagles Be Gathered Together"**

The Savior taught that one of the signs of the times would be the establishment of His Church and the gathering of the Saints to it from around the world: "And now I show unto you a parable. Behold, wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together; so likewise shall mine elect be gathered from the four quarters of the earth" (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:27). **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** taught: "In the parable, as here given, the carcass is the body of the Church to which the eagles, who are Israel, shall fly to find nourishment" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:648).

(*New Testament Student Manual* (2018))

So, a singular carcass is compared to the body of the Church…

**Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:27; Matthew 24:28. "Wheresoever the Carcass Is, There Will the Eagles Be Gathered Together"**

**President Dallin H. Oaks** of the First Presidency discussed how Saints today are blessed as they gather in stakes throughout the world: "With the creation of stakes and the construction of temples in most nations with sizeable populations of the faithful, the current commandment is not to gather to one place but to gather in stakes in our own homelands. There the faithful can enjoy the full blessings of eternity in a house of the Lord. There, in their own homelands, they can obey the Lord's command to enlarge the borders of His people and strengthen her stakes (see D&C 101:21; 133:9, 14). In this way, the stakes of Zion are 'for a defense, and for a refuge from the storm, and from wrath when it shall be poured out without mixture upon the whole earth' (D&C 115:6)" ("Preparation for the Second Coming," *Ensign* or *Liahona,* May 2004, 8).

Here we are taught that the *carcass* became *carcasses,* each "stake of Zion" is then its own carcass. The Lord in this verse says he is not happy with "his people" and he is going to start tearing the church in half. Another way the Lord explained this is with the wheat and the tares parable, which is the same concept—"the time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do" (President Nelson, "The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior's Second Coming," *Ensign,* April 2020).

This separation is brought about by the Redemption of Zion, the Lord lifting his ensign, etc., also known as ***"the*** marvelous work and a wonder" (see applicable section in this book for further review of this topic).

**3 Nephi 21**

**8** And when that day shall come, it shall come to pass that kings shall shut their mouths; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

**9** For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and a marvelous work among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them.

**10** But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them. Yet I will heal him, for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.

**3 Nephi 20**

**16** Then shall ye, who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, go forth among them; and ye shall be in the midst of them who shall be many; and ye shall be among them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, and as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he goeth through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

**17** Thy hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off.

**18** And I will gather my people together as a man gathereth his sheaves into the floor.

**19** For I will make my people with whom the Father hath covenanted, yea, I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass. And thou shalt beat in pieces many people; and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. And behold, I am he who doeth it.

**20** And it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that the sword of my justice shall hang over them at that day; and except they repent it shall fall upon them, saith the Father, yea, even upon all the nations of the Gentiles.

**21** And it shall come to pass that I will establish my people, O house of Israel.

**22** And behold, this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; and it shall be a New Jerusalem. And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you.

**3 Nephi 21**

**23** And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.

**24** And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem.

**25** And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst.

**26** And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, yea, even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem.

**27** Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, with the Father to prepare the way whereby they may come unto me, that they may call on the Father in my name.

**28** Yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father among all nations in preparing the way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance.

**29** And they shall go out from all nations; and they shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight, for I will go before them, saith the Father, and I will be their rearward.

**Doctrine and Covenants 110**

**11** After this vision closed, the heavens were again opened unto us; and Moses appeared before us, and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north.

**Doctrine and Covenants 133**

**25** And the Lord, even the Savior, shall stand in the midst of his people, and shall reign over all flesh.

**26** And they who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord; and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves; and they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence.

**27** And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep.

**28** Their enemies shall become a prey unto them,

**29** And in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water; and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land.

**30** And they shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim, my servants.

**31** And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence.

**The Marvelous Work and Wonder**

1. The Lord resurrects Joseph Smith who works prudently
2. The Redemption of Zion
3. The building of New Jerusalem
4. The calling home of the ten tribes as a body and the Lord gathering in "the residue" of His people (D&C 101:58)

## Isaiah Chapter 6 (2 Nephi 16)

**Isaiah 6 (2 Nephi 16)**

*Isaiah sees the Lord—Isaiah's sins are forgiven—He is called to prophesy—He prophesies of the rejection by the Jews of Christ's teachings—A remnant will return.*

**1** In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

**2** Above it stood the seraphim; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

**3** And one cried unto another, and said: Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.

**4** And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

**5** Then said I: Wo is unto me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips; and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.

**6** Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar;

**7** And he laid it upon my mouth, and said: Lo, this has touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

**8** Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said: Here am I; send me.

**9** And he said: Go and tell this people—Hear ye indeed, but they understood not; and see ye indeed, but they perceived not.

**10** Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes—lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted and be healed.

**11** Then said I: Lord, how long? And he said: Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate;

**12** And the Lord have removed men far away, for there shall be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.

**13** But yet there shall be a tenth, and they shall return, and shall be eaten, as a teil tree, and as an oak whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves; so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.

This entire chapter is a type of things to come, specifically dealing with "Joseph's Boys" and the Redemption of Zion, following the theme of Isaiah Chapter five.

The leader of Israel dies. The dualism here could be the president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints dying or the president of the United States dying. We are taught that the Book of Mormon is "our latter-day survival guide" (President Nelson, "Embrace the Future with Faith"), and in the Book of Mormon it wasn't the prophet who was slain but rather the chief judge who was assassinated by Gadianton robbers. In either case, this may or may not be an actual point of reference we can definitively say has dualism.

The prophet is lifted up in the temple and sees the Lord in His temple full of angels.

**Moses 7**

**60** And the Lord said unto Enoch: As I live, even so will I come in the last days, in the days of wickedness and vengeance, to fulfil the oath which I have made unto you concerning the children of Noah;

**61** And the day shall come that the earth shall rest, but before that day the heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, but my people will I preserve;

**62** And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.

**Joseph Smith**

> The Glorious Resurrection
>
> Now I understand by this quotation, that God clearly manifested to Enoch the redemption which He prepared, by offering the Messiah as a Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world; and by virtue of the same, the glorious resurrection of the Savior, and the resurrection of all the human family, even a resurrection of their corporeal bodies, is brought to pass; and also righteousness and truth are to sweep the earth as with a flood. And now, I ask, how righteousness and truth are going to sweep the earth as with a flood? I will answer. Men and angels are to be co-workers in bringing to pass this great work, and Zion is to be prepared, even a new Jerusalem, for the elect that are to be gathered from the four quarters of the earth, and to be established an holy city, for the tabernacle of the Lord shall be with them. ...
>
> We Cannot Be Perfect Without Our Dead
>
> The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed. The mustard seed is small, but brings forth a large tree, and the fowls lodge in the branches. The fowls are the angels. Thus angels come down, combine together to gather their children, and gather them. We cannot be made perfect without them, nor they without us; when these things are done, the Son of Man will descend, the Ancient of Days sit; we may come to an innumerable company of angels, have communion with and receive instruction from them. Paul told about Moses' proceedings; spoke of the children of Israel being baptized. (1 Cor. 10:1–4.)19 He knew this, and that all the ordinances and blessings were in the Church. Paul had these things, and we may have the fowls of heaven lodge in the branches, etc.
>
> The "Horn" made war with the Saints and overcame them, until the Ancient of Days came; judgment was given to the Saints of the Most High from the Ancient of Days; the time came that the Saints possessed the Kingdom.
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 84, 159)

The foundations of the threshold trembled and the house was filled with smoke. The presence of smoke is symbolic of the presence and glory of God (Exodus. 19:18, Rev. 15:8). Fire and smoke are frequently used to depict the glory of celestial realms. This ties directly into the redemption of Zion:

**Elder Orson Pratt**

> And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion and upon her assemblies a cloud and smoke by day, and shining, flaming fire by night; and upon all the glory shall be a defense and there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge and for a covert from storm and from rain. How often I have quoted this passage! I am not tired of quoting it yet. It is among the great events of the latter days; it is among those marvels and wonders that are just at hand. A Zion to be built up; a city of Zion having habitations, and upon these habitations a supernatural light by night, and a supernatural cloud by day. No such event has happened since this prophecy was uttered by the Prophet Isaiah, it remains to be fulfilled in the latter days.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 14, p. 343)

Isaiah feels unworthy—his "lips are unclean, but he is purified and purged."

**3 Nephi 24**

> **1** Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.
>
> **2** But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap.
>
> **3** And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.
>
> **4** Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

This ties into Isaiah 1:24–27.

**Heber C. Kimball**

> Take the boys [and girls] here, the sons of our brethren and sisters, and you may cut them into inch pieces, and they will not forsake this cause, but they will defend it to the last. Some of them may be rough, and perhaps some of them do not pray much, but send them into the vineyard, and then you will see them shew forth the power that is in them. At present the Prophet Joseph's boys lay apparently in a state of slumber, everything seems to be perfectly calm with them, but by and by God will wake them up, and they will roar like the thunders of Mount Sinai.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 4, Discourse 1)

**D&C 77:9. What Is the Significance of the Angel from the East Sealing the Servants of God?**

> The four angels who are given power over the earth are kept from sending forth desolations upon the earth until God's servants are sealed in their foreheads. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that this sealing "signifies sealing the blessing upon their heads, meaning the everlasting covenant, thereby making their calling and election sure" (*Teachings,* p. 321).
>
> **Elder Orson Pratt** gave this additional explanation:
>
> "When the Temple is built [in the New Jerusalem] the sons of the two Priesthoods [Melchizedek and Aaronic] ... will enter into that Temple ... and all of them who are pure in heart will behold the face of the Lord and that too before he comes in his glory in the clouds of heaven, for he will suddenly come to his Temple, and he will purify the sons of Moses and of Aaron, until they shall be prepared to offer in that Temple an offering that shall be acceptable in the sight of the Lord. In doing this, he will purify not only the minds of the Priesthood in that Temple, but he will purify their bodies until they shall be quickened, and renewed and strengthened, and they will be partially changed, not to immortality, but changed in part that they can be filled with the power of God, and they can stand in the presence of Jesus, and behold his face in the midst of that Temple.
>
> "This will prepare them for further ministrations among the nations of the earth, it will prepare them to go forth in the days of tribulation and vengeance upon the nations of the wicked, when God will smite them with pestilence, plague and earthquake, such as former generations never knew. Then the servants of God will need to be armed with the power of God, they will need to have that sealing blessing pronounced upon their foreheads that they can stand forth in the midst of these desolations and plagues and not be overcome by them. When John the Revelator describes this scene he says he saw four angels sent forth, ready to hold the four winds that should blow from the four quarters of heaven. Another angel ascended from the east and cried to the four angels, and said, 'Smite not the earth now, but wait a little while.' 'How long?' 'Until the servants of our God are sealed in their foreheads.' What for? To prepare them to stand forth in the midst of these desolations and plagues, and not be overcome. When they are prepared, when they have received a renewal of their bodies in the Lord's temple, and have been filled with the Holy Ghost and purified as gold and silver in a furnace of fire, then they will be prepared to stand before the nations of the earth and preach glad tidings of salvation in the midst of judgments that are to come like a whirlwind upon the wicked." (In *Journal of Discourses,* 15:365–66.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (2nd ed., 2001), pp. 169–170)

Isaiah is sent forth to preach, but the people don't believe him; cities are made desolate.

**3 Nephi 21**

**9** For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and a marvelous work among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them.

**1 Nephi 14**

**7** For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men; a work which shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or on the other—either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds unto their being brought down into captivity, and also into destruction, ***both temporally and spiritually,*** according to the captivity of the devil, of which I have spoken.

Despite the view of desolation, Isaiah is shown that "Israel would survive the coming devastation as does a tree that is stripped of its leaves in winter but still remains alive" (Student Manual, "The Establishment of Zion") through its roots. What the prophet is led to expect is a series of successive chastisements sifting the people ("by fire," 3 Nephi 24), till the remnant of the chosen ones alone are left purified as silver. This is interesting, considering in the parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees the olive trees take damage, yet we learn here that the roots are preserved. Israel is to "return" and redeem Zion and build the New Jerusalem, eventually filling the desolate cities themselves:

**Doctrine and Covenants 113**

**7** Questions by Elias Higbee: What is meant by the command in Isaiah, 52d chapter, 1st verse, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion—and what people had Isaiah reference to?

**8** He had reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of priesthood to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel; and to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage; also to return to that power which she had lost.

**9** What are we to understand by Zion loosing herself from the bands of her neck; 2d verse?

**10** We are to understand that the scattered remnants are exhorted to return to the Lord from whence they have fallen; which if they do, the promise of the Lord is that he will speak to them, or give them revelation. See the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses. The bands of her neck are the curses of God upon her, or the remnants of Israel in their scattered condition among the Gentiles.

**1 Nephi 14**

**8** And it came to pass that when the angel had spoken these words, he said unto me: Rememberest thou the covenants of the Father unto the house of Israel? I said unto him, Yea.

**9** And it came to pass that he said unto me: Look, and behold that great and abominable church, which is the mother of abominations, whose founder is the devil.

**10** And he said unto me: Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth.

**11** And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters; and she had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people.

**12** And it came to pass that I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and its numbers were few, because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God, were also upon all the face of the earth; and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small, because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw.

**13** And it came to pass that I beheld that the great mother of abominations did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God.

**14** And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.

**15** And it came to pass that I beheld that the wrath of God was poured out upon that great and abominable church, insomuch that there were wars and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth.

**16** And as there began to be wars and rumors of wars among all the nations which belonged to the mother of abominations, the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold, the wrath of God is upon the mother of harlots; and behold, thou seest all these things—

**17** And when the day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon the mother of harlots, which is the great and abominable church of all the earth, whose founder is the devil, then, at that day, the work of the Father shall commence, in preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants, which he hath made to his people who are of the house of Israel.

**3 Nephi 22**

**1** And then shall that which is written come to pass: Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child; for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.

**2** Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes;

**3** For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

**4** Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame; for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

**5** For thy maker, thy husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel—the God of the whole earth shall he be called.

**6** For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.

**7** For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee.

**8** In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

# Isaiah 7–9, 2 Nephi 17–19

## Isaiah Chapter 7 (2 Nephi 17)

**Isaiah 7 (2 Nephi 17)**

*Ephraim and Syria wage war against Judah—Christ will be born of a virgin.*

**1** And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it.

In this verse we learn that the King of Syria and the king of Ephraim went to war against Jerusalem and could not prevail against it. Ahaz=-Jerusalem, Rezin = Syria, Pekah=Ephraim. This chapter can be very confusing because with Isaiah's dualism things become mirror images and in most other chapters Isaiah takes only one dualism at a time (i.e., Judah is Jerusalem vs Ephraim is New Jerusalem). This chapter however contains Ephraim, Judah, Jerusalem etc. all in one. So the reading of it because a little like opposite day. If Jerusalem's dualism is the New Jerusalem, Judah's dualism would be Ephraim, Ephraim's dualism would be Judah and Syria's dualism would an antagonist of modern-day Assyria. Once you identify the modern-day Assyrian and modern-day Assyria you will be able to identify modern day Syria by it being antagonistic towards Assyria. I will try to steer clear as much as possible from identifying unknown and speculative comparisons.

**Back to Isaiah 7 (2 Nephi 17)**

**2** And it was told the house of David, saying: Syria is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.

**(13-39) Isaiah 7:1–9. A Prophetic Warning against an Alliance between Israel (Ephraim) and Syria**

> The kingdom of Israel (Ephraim) in the north had formed an alliance with Syria for mutual strength and protection against the conquering empire of Assyria. When Judah refused to join the alliance, they threatened to subjugate Judah and attacked their southern foe. (see 2 Kings 15:36–38; 16:1–6).
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),
>
> p. 144)

**2 Nephi 17:2. The House of David**

> The phrase "heart was moved" shows that Ahaz and his people were afraid when they learned that Syria and Ephraim were allies.
>
> (*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

So with dualism, what have we learned? Judah (old Israel) will ally with a modern-day Syria because they are afraid of the modern-day Assyria. They will then demand the allegiance of Ephraim (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, America, New Jerusalem) in that New World Order. The alliance of Jerusalem with Syria will shock the American president/President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Americans/Saints—that Jerusalem would ally with Syria and make such demands. When Ephraim refuses to join, Judah will then wage war against Ephraim's "southern foe," almost like "southern border."

With dualism this does not have to be an actual bloody war, this could be an economic/social/geopolitical/demographic/etc. war.

**Back to Isaiah 7 (2 Nephi 17)**

**3** Then said the Lord unto Isaiah: Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou and Shearjashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field;

**(13-39) Isaiah 7:1–9. A Prophetic Warning against an Alliance between Israel (Ephraim) and Syria**

> Isaiah was directed to warn King Ahaz against seeking political alliances for Judah in order to defend his people. The king, the third of the kings of Judah that Isaiah was sent to counsel, eventually rejected the Lord's warning (see 2 Kings 16:7–20; see also Enrichment F.)
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),
>
> p. 144)

**(13-40) Isaiah 7:3. Who Was Shear-jashub?**

> He was one of the sons of the prophet Isaiah who accompanied his father in visiting the king. His name was a prophetic one that meant "the remnant shall return" (Isaiah 7:3a; see also Notes and Commentary on Isaiah 8:18).
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 144)

**2 Nephi 17:3. Meet at the Upper Pool**

> The conduit referred to in 2 Nephi 17:3 is an aqueduct. Ahaz may have been checking the city's water supply in case of a siege during war.
>
> The fuller's field was a place where clothes were washed.
>
> (*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

What do we learn in this verse through dualism? The Lord goes and visits the president of the United States/The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, warns against forming alliances with anybody, and reminds them that deliverance will be found in the remnant which shall return. This conversation will take place both "on the Lord's House" and in the courts of the United States.

**Brigham Young** said:

> When our brethren the Quorum of the 12 shall be called to the courts of Washington to give an account of the position of the Latter Day Saints... the world will be in commotion and the Lord will have something to work upon. It will be after this when our Savior and others will make their appearance on the earth among the Latter Day Saints.
>
> (Recorded in a letter from Amanda H. Wilcox, March 11, 1904)

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

> **46** Now, the servants of the nobleman went and did as their lord commanded them, and planted the olive trees, and built a hedge round about, and set watchmen, and began to build a tower.
>
> **47** And while they were yet laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves: And what need hath my lord of this tower?
>
> **48** And consulted for a long time, saying among themselves: What need hath my lord of this tower, seeing this is a time of peace?
>
> **49** Might not this money be given to the exchangers? For there is no need of these things.
>
> **50** And while they were at variance one with another they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord.

**51** And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive trees.

**52** Now, behold, the nobleman, the lord of the vineyard, called upon his servants, and said unto them, Why! what is the cause of this great evil?

**53** Ought ye not to have done even as I commanded you, and—after ye had planted the vineyard, and built the hedge round about, and set watchmen upon the walls thereof—built the tower also, and set a watchman upon the tower, and watched for my vineyard, and not have fallen asleep, lest the enemy should come upon you?

**54** And behold, the watchman upon the tower would have seen the enemy while he was yet afar off; and then ye could have made ready and kept the enemy from breaking down the hedge thereof, and saved my vineyard from the hands of the destroyer.

**55** And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together ***the residue of my servants,*** and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;

**56** And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard; for it is mine

We should have built the tower, and when we failed to do that, the destroyer came in ("southern border") and destroyed the work. The Lord will have to work a deliverance for His people, and He will do it through "the remnant"—or as it says here, with "the residue of [His] servants, … the strength of [His] house" (D&C 101:55)—not through alliances with "The Assyrian" or "destroyer"…

**Back to Isaiah 7 (2 Nephi 17)**

**4** And say unto him: Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be faint-hearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah.

**5** Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee, saying:

**6** Let us go up against Judah and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, yea, the son of Tabeal.

**7** Thus saith the Lord God: It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.

**8** For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus, Rezin; and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken that it be not a people.

**9** And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. If ye will not believe surely ye shall not be established.

Continuing with the dualism, Ephraim is told to not be afraid and to not make alliances with anybody—trust in the Lord instead and deliverance will come from the remnant. They then compare the alliance between Judah and the modern-day Syria as that of two tails on a creature (i.e., Serpent, dragon), but he says that this dragon has merely "smoking firebrands" which were torches that had burned out. Meaning this alliance would have no lasting strength and thus pose no long-term threat. They also warn the president that this alliance's goal is inserting a puppet president (from modern day Syria) into the United States/The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but ***the Lord won't allow this to happen…***

This is further nailed down in the Book of Mormon where we are told:

**2 Nephi 10**

**11** And this land shall be a land of liberty unto the Gentiles, and there shall be no kings upon the land, who shall raise up unto the Gentiles.

**12** And I will fortify this land against all other nations.

And in the **Official Declarations** we read:

The Lord will never permit me or any other man who stands as President of this Church to lead you astray. It is not in the programme. It is not in the mind of God. If I were to attempt that, the Lord would remove me out of my place, and so He will any other man who attempts to lead the children of men astray from the oracles of God and from their duty.

(Sixty-first Semiannual General Conference of the Church, Monday, October 6, 1890, Salt Lake City, Utah. Reported in *Deseret Evening News,* October 11, 1890, p. 2.)

**Back to Isaiah 7 (2 Nephi 17)**

**10** Moreover, the Lord spake again unto Ahaz, saying:

**11** Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depths, or in the heights above.

**12** But Ahaz said: I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord.

**13** And he said: Hear ye now, O house of David; is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?

**14** Therefore, the Lord himself shall give you a sign—Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

**15** Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and to choose the good.

**16** For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.

**17** The Lord shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah, the king of Assyria.

What happens here? Continuing with dualism in mind, the Lord will say to the leaders of Ephraim "ask the Lord for any sign in the heavens above or on the earth beneath and he will make it happen." But the leaders refuse, not because they are unwilling to tempt God but because they do not want the Lord interfering with their plans to make an alliance with other nations. The Lord then reveals the sign(s) anyways.

Joseph Smith explained this time period when he said, "there will signs in heavens above and on the earth beneath, the sun turned into darkness and the moon to blood, earthquakes in divers places, and seas heaving beyond their bounds; then will appear one grand sign of the Son of Man in heaven. But what will the world do? They will say it is a planet, a comet, etc. But the Son of man will come as the sign of the coming of the Son of Man, which will be as the light of the morning cometh out of the east" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p, 286–287).

Also at this time, the Lord declares that a child will shortly be born, and that child's name will be ***"God is with us."*** This kingdom of God is known as the New Jerusalem and will be established by those of the Church of the Firstborn with Christ being among them.

**Revelation 12**

**1** And there appeared a great sign in heaven in the likeness of things on the earth; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

**2** And the woman being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

**3** And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and his throne.

**9** And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ:

**13** …when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

**14** Therefore to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might flee into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

**15** And the serpent casteth out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

**16** And the earth helpeth the woman, and the earth openeth her mouth, and swalloweth up the flood which the dragon casteth out of his mouth.

**17** Therefore the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have also the testimony of Jesus Christ.

The Lord next says that from the birth of that child, the child won't reach the age of accountability ("before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good ") before the enemies of the Kingdom of Christ are utterly destroyed. According to Judaic law, this age of accountability is 12–13 years old, but according to God it always has been eight.

**JST Genesis 17**

**11** …that thou mayest know forever that children are not accountable before me until they are ***eight years old.***

The Battle of Armageddon will see these forces destroyed, and these battles take place in what is called the Valley of Decision… Beautiful imagery and dualism here as you cannot make this decision to fight against God without first being accountable before Him.

The Lord closes by promising that the promised land of America will yet see the best days ahead.

**3 Nephi 24**

**10** … prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

**11** And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the fields, saith the Lord of Hosts.

**12** And all nations shall call you blessed, for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of Hosts.

**Back to Isaiah 7 (2 Nephi 17)**

**18** And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria.

**19** And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes.

**Zechariah 10**

**2** For the idols have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have told false dreams; they comfort in vain: therefore they went their way as a flock, they were troubled, because there was no shepherd. (priestcraft, false teachers, precepts of men, etc.)

**3** Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the LORD of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle. (the servants of the nobleman)

**4** Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together.

**5** ¶ And they shall be as mighty men, which tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle: and they shall fight, because the LORD is with them, and the riders on horses shall be confounded.

**6** And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the LORD their God, and will hear them.

**7** And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine: yea, their children shall see it, and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD.

**8** I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: and they shall increase as they have increased. (Joseph's Boys, the Redemption of Zion, etc.)

**9** And I will sow them among the people: and they shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children, and turn again.

**10** I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and place shall not be found for them.

**11** And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea, and all the deeps of the river shall dry up: and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away.

**12** And I will strengthen them in the LORD; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the LORD.

**(33-36) Zechariah 10:10–11. Gathering of Israel**

"Egypt, as we have already shown at, is rather introduced in all the passages mentioned simply as a type of the land of bondage, on account of its having been the land in which Israel lived in the olden time, under the oppression of the heathen world. And Asshur [Assyria] is introduced in the same way, as the land into which the ten tribes had been afterwards exiled. This typical [symbolical] significance is placed beyond all doubt by ver. 11, since the redemption of Israel out of the countries named is there exhibited under the type of the liberation of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt under the guidance of Moses. … The Ephraimites are to return into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; the former representing the territory of the ten tribes in the olden time to the east of Jordan, the latter that to the west." (Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary,* 10:2:351–52.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), pp. 346–347)

We learn here that the symbolism of "Egypt" is that of a type of bondage, and the Lord is freeing them from that bondage by calling them home, by gathering them.

**Doctrine and Covenants 113**

**7** Questions by Elias Higbee: What is meant by the command in Isaiah, 52d chapter, 1st verse, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion—and what people had Isaiah reference to?

**8** He had reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of priesthood ***to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel;*** and to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage; also to return to that power which she had lost.

**9** What are we to understand ***by Zion loosing herself from the bands of her neck;*** 2d verse?

**10** We are to understand that the scattered remnants are exhorted to return to the Lord from whence they have fallen; which if they do, the promise of the Lord is that he will speak to them, or give them revelation. See the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses. ***The bands of her neck are the curses of God upon her, or the remnants of Israel in their scattered condition among the Gentiles.***

Israel being in their scattered condition amongst the Gentiles away from their "land of promise" is them "being in Egypt"… When this event takes place—when the Lord raises His ensign and hisses forth to the nations and removes these bands and calls them home—there will be "little Egypts" all over the globe!

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**10** I have sworn, and the decree hath gone forth by a former commandment which I have given unto you, that I would let fall the sword of mine indignation in behalf of my people; and even as I have said, it shall come to pass.

**11** Mine indignation is soon to be poured out without measure upon all nations; and this will I do when the cup of their iniquity is full.

**12** And in that day all who are found upon the watch-tower, or in other words, all mine Israel, shall be saved.

**13** And they that have been scattered shall be gathered.

**14** And all they who have mourned shall be comforted.

**15** And all they who have given their lives for my name shall be crowned.

**16** Therefore, let your hearts be comforted concerning Zion; for all flesh is in mine hands; be still and know that I am God.

**17** Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered.

**18** They that remain, and are pure in heart, shall return, and come to their inheritances, they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy, to build up the waste places of Zion—

**19** And all these things that the prophets might be fulfilled.

**20** And, behold, there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed, for the work of the gathering of my saints

**Jeremiah 16**

**14** ¶ Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

**15** But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

**16** ¶ Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

**Back to Isaiah 7 (2 Nephi 17)**

**20** In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet; and it shall also consume the beard.

**21** And it shall come to pass in that day, a man shall nourish a young cow and two sheep;

**22** And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk they shall give he shall eat butter; for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land.

**23** And it shall come to pass in that day, every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, which shall be for briers and thorns.

**24** With arrows and with bows shall men come thither, because all the land shall become briers and thorns.

**25** And all hills that shall be digged with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns; but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and the treading of lesser cattle.

**2 Nephi 17:20. Shaving Head and Beard**

Shaving the head and beard was customarily done to mourn a death in the family. The forcible shearing of a captive, however, insulted and identified the one in subjection.

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

**2 Nephi 17:22. "Butter and Honey"**

Butter and honey may seem like luxury items, but the land was laid waste by the Assyrians (see 2 Nephi 17:23). Consequently, the survivors had to live off the land like nomadic Bedouins with no crops to eat. Butter and honey likely referred to the curdled yogurt that would come from goats or sheep and any wild honey that could be found.

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

These verses describe bondage as well as famine and desolation—all things that will surround the events of the Redemption of Zion and the building of New Jerusalem (3 Nephi 21:12–25; Ether 13:4–8).

## Isaiah Chapter 8 (2 Nephi 18)

**Isaiah 8 (2 Nephi 18)**

*Christ will be as a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense—Seek the Lord, not peeping wizards—Turn to the law and to the testimony for guidance.*

**1** Moreover, the word of the Lord said unto me: Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen, concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

**2** And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.

**3** And I went unto the prophetess; and she conceived and bare a son. Then said the Lord to me: Call his name, Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

**4** For behold, the child shall not have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother, before the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria.

**(13-47) Isaiah 8. Warning of the Impending Assyrian Invasion**

The chapter is a continuation of the historical events introduced in chapter 7 (see Enrichment F). The prophet Isaiah is again to warn Judah against alliances, for, as he prophesies, they will be ineffective. The Messianic promise of Immanuel ("God is with us") would prevail in their behalf. The Assyrian invasion would come, but Judah would still survive. Isaiah concluded his writing with a warning against the false teachings and practices that would pull Judah away from the law and testimony that had been revealed to them.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 145)

**(10-18) 2 Nephi 18:1–12, 18**

[Symbolic Names:] Isaiah was the father of two sons, Maher-shalal-hash-baz (see 2 Nephi 18:3) and Shear-jashub (see 2 Nephi 17:3). Both names are symbolic of the Lord's intentions for the northern kingdom of Israel. Maher-shalal-hash-baz is a Hebrew term meaning "to speed to the spoil, he hasteneth the prey" (Isaiah 8:1d; see also 2 Nephi 18:1b). This name describes the events spoken of in 2 Nephi 18:4. The ten tribes were overrun and despoiled by the Assyrians when Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom, was besieged. Shear-jashub is a Hebrew term meaning "the remnant shall return" (Isaiah 7:3a). This is a reference to the day when Israel will be gathered from her scattered condition. Thus Isaiah could report: "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of Hosts" (2 Nephi 18:18).

(Book of Mormon Student Manual (1979), pp. 93–94)

**(13-48) Isaiah 8:1–4. Who Was "Maher-shalal-hash-baz"?**

The expression "prophetess" is used here only to designate the prophet's wife, not a prophetic office or gift (see Young, *Book of Isaiah,* 1:303).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),

p. 145)

The first shall be last and the last shall be first. Identifying dualism: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is Isaiah's wife, is the virgin Mary who will conceive and bear a child and the name of the child shall be the New Jerusalem or Immanuel which means "God is with us." The prophet's warning to Ephraim is clarified in which he says that once "the child" is born, not 3.5 years ("the child shall not have knowledge to cry…before") will pass before the alliance of Israel and the modern day Syria is broken, scattered and their wealth taken.

**Revelation 12**

> **14** Therefore to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might flee into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished ***for a time, and times, and half a time,*** from the face of the serpent.

A *time* equals a year, *times* equals two years, and *half a time* equals half a year, for a total of 3.5 years or 1,260 days.

**Back to Isaiah 8 (2 Nephi 18)**

**5** The Lord spake also unto me again, saying:

**6** Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son;

**7** Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria and all his glory; and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks.

**8** And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.

**9** Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear all ye of far countries; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces.

**10** Take counsel together, and it shall come to naught; speak the word, and it shall not stand; for God is with us.

**2 Nephi 18:6–7. "The Waters of Shiloah That Go Softly"**

> One commentary explains a possible meaning of the comparison between "the waters of Shiloah that go softly" (2 Nephi 18:6) and the "strong and many" (verse 7) waters of the river: "Isaiah describes and then contrasts two forms of waters—the soft, rolling waters of Shiloah, located near the temple mount of Jerusalem, and the waters of the Euphrates, a great river that often floods out of control. The waters of Shiloah are controlled and inviting, whereas the Euphrates is dangerous and destructive. The waters of Shiloah bring life to those who drink them; the Euphrates brings death to those who are swept up in its flood. Isaiah's images of the two waters are symbolic: the former represents Jesus, the King of Heaven, who is likened to the waters of life; the latter is the king of Assyria, who leads his great, destructive armies and 'cover the earth [like a flood … and] destroy the inhabitants thereof' (Jer. 46:8). Inasmuch as the inhabitants of Judah had rejected Jesus, or the waters of Shiloah, the Lord set upon them the king of Assyria, or the strong and mighty waters of the river that would overflow their banks and cover the entire land with its destruction" (Donald W. Parry, Jay A. Parry, Tina M. Peterson, *Understanding Isaiah* [1998], 83).
>
> (*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

**2 Nephi 18:8. "Even to the Neck"**

> The symbolic expression "even to the neck" indicates that the king of Assyria will conquer Judah's lands, even to Jerusalem. By 701 B.C., Assyria had overrun all of Judah except its capital city.
>
> (*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

**2 Nephi 18:8, 10. "God Is with Us"**

> At the point when Assyria overran Judah, all seemed to be lost, but Immanuel, or "God is with us," prevented the destruction of Jerusalem (2 Nephi 18:10). Isaiah 37:33–36 describes this miraculous event where not even an arrow flew over the walls.
>
> (*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

With dualism we understand that it is Ephraim that is warned of the contrast of choosing the Lord (calm waters) to the Assyrian (dangerous waters). With dualism we understand that Jerusalem will be allied with modern-day Syria as an antithesis to Assyria. Because Ephraim chooses to ally/pay tribute to the modern-day Assyrians vs build the tower (Doctrine and Covenants 101) the Lord will allow the land to be conquered by the Assyrian economically, politically, socially and potentially even physically. The Assyrian will pass through all of Ephraim and get all the way to "the neck." We have the neck identified with "God is with us," it is the New Jerusalem. The Lord will protect New Jerusalem in the same miraculous fashion as he protected Old Jerusalem as referenced above. It is explained that from this point on the wicked will begin to be swept from the earth and there will be no plan, council etc. that can stop this.

**Revelation 12**

> **15** And the serpent casteth out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.
>
> **16** And the earth helpeth the woman, and the earth openeth her mouth, and swalloweth up the flood which the dragon casteth out of his mouth.

**Back to Isaiah 8 (2 Nephi 18)**

**11** For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying:

**12** Say ye not, A confederacy, to all to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.

**13** Sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.

Footnote for confederacy (Isaiah 8:12a): Judah should not rely on secret plots with others for safety.

Ephraim will try to make secret confederacies, plots, alliances with the Assyrian. The Lord warns against this which was discussed in the previous chapter. In the previous chapter we learn that Ephraim did not want a sign from the Lord because they don't want the Lord interfering with their plans. With that as a basis and with the addition of what we learn in this chapter, we can deduce that by the time the Lord warns Ephraim, Ephraim is already, to some degree or another, involved in the schemes. The Lord warns to not rely on those things, meaning whatever deal you have struck with the modern Assyrian won't work. Instead, put your trust in the Lord and the New Jerusalem—the tower.

**2 Nephi 27**

> **24** And again it shall come to pass that the Lord shall say unto him that shall read the words that shall be delivered him:
>
> **25** Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, ***but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men—***
>
> **26** Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.
>
> **27** And ***wo unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord! And their works are in the dark; and they say: Who seeth us, and who knoweth us?*** And they also say: Surely, your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay. But behold, I will

show unto them, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I know all their works. For shall the work say of him that made it, he made me not? Or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, he had no understanding?

**28** But behold, saith the Lord of Hosts: I will show unto the children of men that it is yet a very little while and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field; and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest.

**Back to Isaiah 8 (2 Nephi 18)**

**14** And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and for a crock of offense to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

**15** And many among them shall stumble and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.

**2 Nephi 18:14. A Sanctuary, "a Stone of Stumbling"**

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles noted the ability of "Immanuel" to both save and condemn: "When the stone of Israel comes, he shall be a sanctuary for the righteous; they shall find peace and safety under the shelter of his gospel; but he shall be a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offense (as also a gin and a snare) to the rebellious and disobedient in Jerusalem and in all Israel. They shall stumble and fall because of him; they shall take offense because of his teachings and be condemned and broken and snared and taken for rejecting them" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 3 vols. [1971–73], 3:292–93).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

Once again with dualism, Immanuel is the New Jerusalem. We have already learned in previous chapters that Joseph Smith must return. These verses once again clarify the marvelous work and a wonder spoken of in 1 Nephi 14:7 "which shall be everlasting either on the one hand or the other." McConkie says that the teachings will be the cause of the people stumbling.

**President Russell M. Nelson**

As I have stated before, the gathering of Israel is the most important work taking place on earth today. One crucial element of this gathering is preparing a people who are able, ready, and worthy to receive the Lord when He comes again, a people who have already chosen Jesus Christ over this fallen world, a people who rejoice in their agency to live the higher, holier laws of Jesus Christ. I call upon you, my dear brothers and sisters, to become this righteous people.

("Overcome the World and Find Rest," General Conference, October 2022)

**Back to Isaiah 8 (2 Nephi 18)**

**16** Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.

**17** And I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.

**Doctrine and Covenants 109**

**38** Put upon thy servants the testimony of the covenant, that when they go out and proclaim thy word they may seal up the law, and prepare the hearts of thy saints for all those judgments thou art about to send, in thy wrath, upon the inhabitants of the earth, because of their transgressions, that thy people may not faint in the day of trouble.

**39** And whatsoever city thy servants shall enter, and the people of that city receive their testimony, let thy peace and thy salvation be upon that city; that they may gather out of that city the righteous, that they may come forth to Zion, or to her stakes, the places of thine appointment, with songs of everlasting joy;

**40** And until this be accomplished, let not thy judgments fall upon that city.

**41** And whatsoever city thy servants shall enter, and the people of that city receive not the testimony of thy servants, and thy servants warn them to save themselves from this untoward generation, let it be upon that city according to that which thou hast spoken by the mouths of thy prophets.

**42** But deliver thou, O Jehovah, we beseech thee, thy servants from their hands, and cleanse them from their blood.

**43** O Lord, we delight not in the destruction of our fellow men; their souls are precious before thee;

**44** But thy word must be fulfilled. Help thy servants to say, with thy grace assisting them: Thy will be done, O Lord, and not ours.

**45** We know that thou hast spoken by the mouth of thy prophets terrible things concerning the wicked, in the last days—that thou wilt pour out thy judgments, without measure;

**46** Therefore, O Lord, deliver thy people from the calamity of the wicked; enable thy servants to seal up the law, and bind up the testimony, that they may be prepared against the day of burning.

**47** We ask thee, Holy Father, to remember those who have been driven by the inhabitants of Jackson county, Missouri, from the lands of their inheritance, and break off, O Lord, this yoke of affliction that has been put upon them.

**48** Thou knowest, O Lord, that they have been greatly oppressed and afflicted by wicked men; and our hearts flow out with sorrow because of their grievous burdens.

**49** O Lord, how long wilt thou suffer this people to bear this affliction, and the cries of their innocent ones to ascend up in thine ears, and their blood come up in testimony before thee, and not make a display of thy testimony in their behalf?

**50** Have mercy, O Lord, upon the wicked mob, who have driven thy people, that they may cease to spoil, that they may repent of their sins if repentance is to be found;

**51** But if they will not, make bare thine arm, O Lord, and redeem that which thou didst appoint a Zion unto thy people.

**Back to Isaiah 8 (2 Nephi 18)**

**18** Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of Hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion.

**(13-50) Isaiah 8:18. "I and the Children Whom the Lord Hath Given Me Are for Signs and for Wonders in Israel"**

The name *Isaiah* means "Jehovah saves." The names of his two known sons, Shear-jashub (Isaiah 7:3) and Maher-shalal-hash-baz (Isaiah 8:1), also convey a message to the people in Judah. (See Notes and Commentary on Isaiah 7:3; 8:1–4.) Whenever anyone saw or heard Isaiah and his sons, he was given a message through their names, which were a sign or witness against the people.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 145)

The duality of this is Judah to Ephraim. The signs of Isaiah were to Judah and in the last days the signs from the prophet will be to Ephraim—the names of Isaiah's sons will become Ephraim's reality. The remnant ***shall return,*** God ***will be*** among us, and Jehovah ***will save*** and deliver us from our enemies!

**Back to Isaiah 8 (2 Nephi 18)**

**19** And when they shall say unto you: Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and mutter—should not a people seek unto their God for the living to hear from the dead?

**20** To the law and to the testimony; and if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

**21** And they shall pass through it hardly bestead and hungry; and it shall come to pass that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look upward.

**22** And they shall look unto the earth and behold trouble, and darkness, dimness of anguish, and shall be driven to darkness.

**(13-51) Isaiah 8:19. Warning against Familiar Spirits, Peepers, and Mutterers**

The expression "familiar spirits" is not an accurate term to convey the significance of the Hebrew term used anciently. The Hebrew word '*ob* means "a leather bottle or bag" (see William Gesenius, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament,* p. 15). This object was used by the practitioners of necromancy, a deceptive craft of pretended communication with the dead. The art involved a kind of ventriloquism wherein the voice or message of the "departed spirits" was called forth from the bag or sometimes a pit. (See G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament,* 1:131, 133–34.) The peeping (chirping) and muttering (twittering) somewhat like birds was intended to invoke the departed spirits or to convey the pretended message (see Young, *Book of Isaiah,* 1:318). The Lord warned Israel and Judah of such deceptions early in their history (see Leviticus 19:31; 20:27; Deuteronomy 18:10–11). President Joseph Fielding Smith in commenting on these ancient practices gave this warning that applies even today:

"To seek for information through … any way contrary to the instruction the Lord has given is a sin. The Lord gave positive instruction to Israel when they were in the land of their inheritance that they were to go to him for revelation and to avoid the devices prevalent among the heathen nations who occupied their lands. …

"All through the Bible, the New Testament as well as the Old, the Lord and his prophets have expressed their displeasure when the people turned from the Lord to 'familiar spirits.'" (*Answers to Gospel Questions,* 4:33.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),

p. 145)

When Moses's staff turned into a serpent then Pharaoh's "spiritualists" mimicked the result to a lesser degree. Moses' serpent ate Pharaoh's serpents. Satan is the great imitator, the great mimicker, the great deceiver. When Joseph Smith is resurrected, Satan will seek to mimic it, possibly even with "necromancy." This necromancer is an Anti-Christ. When the Lord says, "cling unto the law and to the testimony" we know that "the law will go forth from New Jerusalem and the Word from Old Jerusalem." We know that "to the testimony and the law!" is a call to build upon the pyramid of truth—the established order of Heaven in revealing truth to man. Those that build upon that rock will stand the rain and tempests when they do come, and come they will. In contrast, those who do not cling to the law and testimony will be hard pressed and oppressed, hungry and driven to darkness, as a foolish man who built his home on sand.

**Doctrine and Covenants 84**

**43** And I now give unto you a commandment to beware concerning yourselves, to give diligent heed to the words of eternal life.

**44** For you shall live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God.

**45** For the word of the Lord is truth, and whatsoever is truth is light, and whatsoever is light is Spirit, even the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

**46** And the Spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the world; and the Spirit enlighteneth every man through the world, that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit.

**47** And every one that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit cometh unto God, even the Father.

**48** And the Father teacheth him of the covenant which he has renewed and confirmed upon you, which is confirmed upon you for your sakes, and not for your sakes only, but for the sake of the whole world.

**49** And the whole world lieth in sin, and groaneth under darkness and under the bondage of sin.

**50** And by this you may know they are under the bondage of sin, because they come not unto me.

**51** For whoso cometh not unto me is under the bondage of sin.

**52** And whoso receiveth not my voice is not acquainted with my voice, and is not of me.

**53** And by this you may know the righteous from the wicked, and that the whole world groaneth under sin and darkness even now.

**54** And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received—

**55** Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation.

**56** And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all.

**57** And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written—

**58** That they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom; otherwise there remaineth a scourge and judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion.

## Isaiah Chapter 9 (2 Nephi 19)

**Isaiah 9 (2 Nephi 19)**

*Isaiah speaks messianically—The people in darkness will see a great light—Unto us a child is born—He will be the Prince of Peace and will reign on David's throne.*

**1** Nevertheless, the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, and afterwards did more grievously afflict by the way of the Red Sea beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations.

**2** The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

Verse one and two refers to a period of vexation starting lightly and then becoming more grievous. The area hit with spiritual (or possible physical) darkness will see a great light, that light is the Savior:

**Matthew 4**

**12** And ***Jesus*** departed into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth in Zebulun, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Nephthalim,

**13** That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

**14** The land of Zebulun and the land of Nephthalim, in the way of the sea beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;

**15** The people which sat in darkness ***saw a great light;*** and unto them that sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.

**16** ¶ From that time ***Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.***

Do we know of a time period dualistically where this could coincide? Yes. Jackson County Missouri, the New Jerusalem, in which location the

kingdom of heaven will be born, and the light, Jesus Christ, will be in the midst.

The reference for "darkness" takes you back to Isaiah 8: 20-22, meaning those who walk in this darkness also are those walking in spiritual darkness because they have not treasured up the Word of God.

**2 Nephi 27**

> **29** And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.
>
> **30** And the meek also shall increase, and their joy shall be in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.
>
> **31** For assuredly as the Lord liveth they shall see that the terrible one is brought to naught, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off;
>
> **32** And they that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of naught.
>
> **33** Therefore, thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.
>
> **34** But when he seeth his children, the work of my hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.
>
> **35** They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

**Back to Isaiah 9 (2 Nephi 19)**

**3** Thou hast multiplied the nation, and increased the joy—they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

This is the time period of New Jerusalem's expansion as a nation, our joy increasing as the tent is enlarged, inhabiting the desolate cities.

**Back to Isaiah 9 (2 Nephi 19)**

**4** For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor.

**5** For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.

We know that Zion awakening and shaking the dust, the redemption of Zion, etc. is to be what finally breaks the yoke of the Assyrian which is the rod of oppression (Doctrine and Covenants 113). This time period is described in multiple locations throughout the Book of Mormon as well—two examples are:

**1 Nephi 22**

> **17** Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire.

**2 Nephi 30**

> **10** For the time speedily cometh that the Lord God shall cause a great division among the people, and the wicked will he destroy; and he will spare his people, yea, even if it so be that he must destroy the wicked by fire.

**(13-53) Isaiah 9:5. "Every Battle … Shall Be with Burning"**

> The prophet wrote in this chapter of Christ's coming as "a great light" (v. 2), His first appearance, and as a "burning" (v. 5), the cleansing and destruction by fire that will accompany His coming in glory (see Isaiah 9:5b).
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 145)

Isaiah 9:5b: This "burning" is to be the cleansing of the earth by fire prior to the setting up of the Messianic kingdom.

The footnotes of Isaiah 9:5b take you to D&C 64:23, "For he that is tithed shall not be burned."

**Back to Isaiah 9 (2 Nephi 19)**

**6** For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

The woman, as we discussed in previous chapters, is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the child she gives birth to is the Kingdom of God—the New Jerusalem, the Church of the Firstborn—and the government will be upon it, and it shall be called wonderful, and "the law shall go forth" from her, etc.

**Back to Isaiah 9 (2 Nephi 19)**

**7** Of the increase of government and peace there is no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.

In verse 6, we learn that the kingdom of God is birthed, and in verse 7, it then says that government—that kingdom—increases. And the increase doesn't end until eventually all thrones are cast down, all other forms of government are ***eventually*** destroyed.

**Daniel 7**

> **13** I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.
>
> **14** And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

The important word that many overlook here is the word ***should.*** When the meetings in Adam-ondi-Ahman occur and the kingdom is eventually handed to the Lord there, there will still be nations and kingdoms throughout the world. This is not the Lord coming in glory and unveiling his face which is the end of all telestial people. The Lord here is given the kingdom and is promised that all nations ***should*** serve him, meaning, the increase of the government will continue until, as Daniel says, "I beheld until the thrones were cast down."

**Back to Isaiah 9 (2 Nephi 19)**

**8** The Lord sent his word unto Jacob and it hath lighted upon Israel.

**9** And all the people shall know, even Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, that say in the pride and stoutness of heart:

With dualism we know that Ephraim is Judah, and we also know, chronologically speaking, the next thing that happens after Zion is redeemed and the New Jerusalem built is that of the 144,000 being sent out with a focus on scattered Israel and Old Jerusalem (Jeremiah 16:16).

The Lord here is sending his word and light, the 144,000, to old Jerusalem.

**Back to Isaiah 9 (2 Nephi 19)**

**10** The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones; the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars.

The footnotes here take you to 1 Kings 5, the chapter heading of this is "Solomon solicits and gains Hiram's help in getting timber to build the temple—The Israelites hew stones and cut timber for the temple." This is more of the same "inhabiting desolate cities" and building/rebuilding of temples etc. in that day.

**Back to Isaiah 9 (2 Nephi 19)**

**11** Therefore the Lord shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and join his enemies together;

**12** The Syrians before and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel with open mouth. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

**13** For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of Hosts.

Despite the fact that there are prophets in their midst and the temple is being rebuilt in Old Jerusalem, we know that the Jews will not turn unto the Lord, neither will they seek the Lord of Hosts. In fact, they will slay the two prophets in the streets, and for this Jerusalem shall be devoured—and were it not for the Lord setting foot on the Mount of Olives and destroying the armies of the world, the Jews in that day would be utterly destroyed.

**Back to Isaiah 9 (2 Nephi 19)**

**14** Therefore will the Lord cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush in one day.

**15** The ancient, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail.

**16** For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.

**17** Therefore the Lord shall have no joy in their young men, neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows; for every one of them is a hypocrite and an evildoer, and every mouth speaketh folly. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

**18** For wickedness burneth as the fire; it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forests, and they shall mount up like the lifting up of smoke.

**19** Through the wrath of the Lord of Hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the fuel of the fire; no man shall spare his brother.

**20** And he shall snatch on the right hand and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand and they shall not be satisfied; they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm—

**21** Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh; they together shall be against Judah. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

These events described here are the events to take place in the Old Jerusalem surrounding the Mount of Olives. When the army of Gog will come up to Jerusalem to be destroyed. These armies will be brought there:

**(I-5) Armageddon: The Army of Gog**

> "partly through the aid of false religionists working miracles that so many people join in this unholy alliance (see Revelation 13:11–15; 19:20). Elder Orson Pratt taught that "so great will be the darkness resting upon Christendom, and so great the bonds of priestcraft with which they will be bound, that they will not understand, and they will be given up to the hardness of their hearts. Then will be fulfilled that saying, That the day shall come when the Lord shall have power over his Saints, and the Devil shall have power over his own dominion. He will give them up to the power of the Devil, and he will have power over them, and he will carry them about as chaff before a whirlwind. He will gather up millions upon millions of people into the valleys around about Jerusalem in order to destroy the Jews after they have gathered. How will the Devil do this? He will perform miracles to do it. The Bible says the kings of the earth and the great ones will be deceived by these false miracles. It says there shall be three unclean spirits that shall go forth working miracles, and they are spirits of devils. Where do they go? To the kings of the earth; and what will they do? Gather them up to battle unto the great day of God Almighty. Where? Into the valley of Armageddon." (*In Journal of Discourses,* 7:189.)
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 293)

In verses 15 and 16 of Isaiah, it is referring to anti-Christs and false prophets and generals that are leading the armies that will be cut off. There will be "three unclean spirits that shall go forth working miracles" – this tells us that there will be at least 3 anti-Christs/false prophets. In verse 21 of Isaiah there are three different groups that are identified that are all murdering each other, most likely all lead by their own anti-Christ/false prophet/generals. The Lord will be represented in the Old Jerusalem with members of the 144,000 as a 4th party. We talk often of two specifically, but there will be many others with them. Speaking of the two specifically:

**(I-6) Gog Will Be Thwarted by the Power of Two Witnesses**

> Their miraculous power seems to be the force preventing Gog and his army from succeeding in annihilating Israel. **Elder Parley P. Pratt** wrote: "John, in the eleventh chapter of Revelation, gives us many more particulars concerning this same event. He informs us that after the city and temple are rebuilt by the Jews, the Gentiles will tread it under foot forty and two months, during which time there will be two prophets continually prophesying and working mighty miracles. And it seems that the Gentile army shall be hindered from utterly destroying and overthrowing the city, while these two prophets continue." (*A Voice of Warning,* p. 33.)
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 293)

Isaiah called these prophets "two sons" and said they were the only hope of deliverance for Israel because they would be "full of the fury of the Lord" (JST, Isaiah 51:19–20; see also JST, Isaiah 51:17–18).

**(I-7) Armageddon: The Final Extremity**

> John showed that eventually the two prophets will be captured and killed by the opposing army, and their bodies will be left in the streets of Jerusalem for "three days and an half" as the forces of evil engage in a great celebration over their death (Revelation 11:9; see also Revelation 11:7–8, 10).
>
> "That level of spiritual debauchery is shown forth by the fact that the wicked not only slay the prophets of God, but boast of their deeds and glory in them. Such people, as the Jaredites and Nephites before them, are ripened in iniquity and are ready for that destruction and burning which shall cleanse the vineyard of corruption when Jesus descends with his chariots of fire." (McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 3:510.)
>
> During the "three days and an half" that the prophets lie dead in the streets, the army will ravage the city of Jerusalem and the remaining population of Israel (Revelation 11:9). Elder Pratt explained: "After a struggle of three years and a half, they [Gog's army] will at length suc-

ceed in destroying these two prophets and then overrunning much of the city; they will send gifts to each other because of the death of the two prophets, and in the meantime will not allow their dead bodies to be put in graves, but will suffer them to lie in the streets of Jerusalem three days and a half, during which time the armies of the Gentiles, consisting of many kindreds, tongues, and nations, passing through the city, plundering the Jews, will see their dead bodies lying in the street." (*Voice of Warning,* p. 33.)

Zechariah says that only one-third of the nation of Israel will survive this final extremity when the "city [Jerusalem] shall be taken, and the houses rifled [looted], and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity" (Zechariah 14:2; see also Zechariah 13:8–9; 14:1).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),

p. 294)

**(I-8) Armageddon: The Deliverance**

"His [Christ's] next appearance [after coming to his temple] will be among the distressed and nearly vanquished sons of Judah. At the crisis of their fate, when the hostile troops of several nations are ravaging the city and all the horrors of war are overwhelming the people of Jerusalem, he will set his feet upon the Mount of Olives, which will cleave and part asunder at his touch. Attended by a host from heaven, he will overthrow and destroy the combined armies of the Gentiles, and appear to the worshipping Jews as the mighty Deliverer and Conquerer so long expected by their race; and while love, gratitude, awe, and admiration swell their bosoms, the Deliverer will show them the tokens of his crucifixion and disclose himself as Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had reviled and whom their fathers put to death. Then will unbelief depart from their souls, and 'the blindness in part which has happened unto Israel' be removed." ("The Second Advent," *Millennial Star,* 10 Sept. 1859, pp. 582–83.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 295)

**(I-8) Armageddon: The Deliverance**

[During] the Lord's fury upon the army of Gog... the armies of Gog will turn upon each other, perhaps in the panic and confusion of the great earthquake (see Ezekiel 38:21; Zechariah 14:13).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 294)

The Ezekiel and Zechariah verses listed above as well as Isaiah verses 19–20 above all refer to the same time period where the three different groups tear each other apart in the streets: the wicked Jews from Jerusalem, the wicked Gentile nation and the wicked Arab nations. It is also pointed out in verses 17 and 18 that there will be no mercy in this day. In multiple locations in the Book of Mormon and Isaiah the Lord warns that these unrighteous elements and the heathens will be consumed together. The manual further explains:

**(I-8) Armageddon: The Deliverance**

The judgments of the Lord upon the armies of Gog is known in the scriptures as the great day of the Lord's "sacrifice" (see Isaiah 34:5–6; Ezekiel 39:17–22), the Lord's "controversy with the nations" (Jeremiah 25:31), the "supper of the great God" (Revelation 19:17; see also Revelation 19:18–21), and "the great winepress of the wrath of God" (Revelation 14:19; see also Revelation 19:15; D&C 133:48–51).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),

p. 295)

Note that one of the descriptions of this day is ***not*** "the Great and Dreadful Day" for it is not on this day. The Great and Dreadful Day, the unveiling of the Lord's face globally does not occur until many years after this event:

**(I-8) Armageddon: The Deliverance**

So great will be the devastation that for seven years Israel will be able to live off the spoils of war left behind (see Ezekiel 39:8–10). It will take seven months to bury the dead, and thereafter burial teams will search out the remaining bodies in an attempt to cleanse the land (see Ezekiel 39:11–16).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 295)

# Isaiah 10–12, 2 Nephi 20–22

## Isaiah Chapter 10 (2 Nephi 20)

This chapter in Isaiah is exceptionally important for Latter-day Saints and the manuals (Old Testament and Book of Mormon [both old and new]) are very sparse when it comes to this chapter. For this reason, there will be a lot more of my personal commentary, not because I think mine is better, but because it just doesn't exist in the manuals. The Old Testament Student Manual for Isaiah 10 lumps the whole chapter together and says, "the destruction of Assyria the wicked" and then says "the destruction of Israel and Assyria ***is a type of things to come*** and ***has its prophesied parallel for the latter days."*** The chapter heading for Isaiah 10 or 2 Nephi 20 says, "The destruction of Assyria ***is a type of the destruction of the wicked at the Second Coming"*** so the manual just quotes the chapter summary. Neither source attempts to explain or show the dualism it says is there, however.

So we know that the events described in this chapter have been fulfilled (history lesson) and we also know that they will be fulfilled (present/future). The history lesson would be useful for those struggling with faith but those with faith, understanding what is to come—what is to happen to them today and in the future—is more valuable (dualism). I will have to provide almost all that dualism in the chapter, once again not because I think I'm better than the manuals but because none is provided in the manuals.

**Isaiah 10 (2 Nephi 20)**

*The destruction of Assyria is a type of the destruction of the wicked at the Second Coming—Few people will be left after the Lord comes again—The remnant of Jacob will return in that day.*

**1** Wo unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed;

**2** To turn away the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!

**3** And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?

**4** Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

To understand these four verses you first need to understand the desolation and you need to understand the visitation.

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

> **31** …and there shall be men standing that shall not pass until they see an overflowing scourge; for a desolating sickness shall sweep the land.

Some people might hastily assume that the scourge and the desolation are one in the same; they are not. Some also in the church erroneously combine this sickness and this scourge with that of the plagues and wrath of God to be poured out in the last days; this is also incorrect. Let us re-read that scripture and change some of the words in that scripture to synonyms of those words and see if your understanding of the verse increases.

> **31** …they shall see an overflowing scourge/whip/***visitation***/punishment; for/because/as a ***desolating*** sickness shall sweep the land.

The verse here in Isaiah is very similar. **Isaiah** asks: "What will ye do in the day of ***visitation***/scourge/whip/punishment?"***and*** "what will ye do in the day of the ***desolation***/desolating sickness which shall come from far?" (See Isaiah 10:3; 2 Nephi 20:3.)

It is interesting to note that Isaiah says the sickness comes "from far," not from America or the New Jerusalem. This desolating sickness paves the way for the overflowing scourge, which happens after or during the sickness. I would assume that some of the signs of the overflowing scourge will crop as soon as the sickness sweeps the land and will get progressively worse from that point on. Like a compromised immune system to a virus, it will get progressively worse over time until the effects of the virus will be easily and readily seen. Isaiah identifies in the verses before it the effects of the overflowing scourge, the signs and symptoms if you will. He describes political decrees/laws that are written which are grievous, then the second thing he describes is the effects of the laws—crushing the poor/widows, their ability to pursue happiness, their freedom is taken away. Another way you can describe these people being crushed by these laws is "unessential," and these laws being decreed make these "unessential's" into prey so that the wicked can rob them further.

"Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain…" has direct tie ins, once again, to the parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees, found in **Doctrine and Covenants 101:**

> **51** And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive trees.
>
> **52** Now, behold, the nobleman, the lord of the vineyard, called upon his servants, and said unto them, Why! what is the cause of this great evil?
>
> **53** Ought ye not to have done even as I commanded you, and—after ye had planted the vineyard, and built the hedge round about, and set watchmen upon the walls thereof—built the tower also, and set a watchman upon the tower, and watched for my vineyard, and not have fallen asleep, lest the enemy should come upon you?
>
> **54** And behold, the watchman upon the tower would have seen the enemy while he was yet afar off; and then ye could have made ready and kept the enemy from breaking down the hedge thereof, and saved my vineyard from the hands of the destroyer.

Without Zion, the New Jerusalem (i.e., "the tower"), the Lord will not come, and "without me," the "watchman on the tower" (i.e., "the Lord"), we will have to bow down under the prisoners, and fall under the slain…

For a more complete breakdown of the concepts of the "desolating sickness" and "the generation," see *Section One: A Sense of Urgency.*

**Back to Isaiah 10 (2 Nephi 20)**

**5** O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is their indignation.

**6** I will send him against a hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

At this point in time Isaiah identifies the modern-day Assyrian being sent against a hypocritical nation, which is America, and this Assyrian is the rod of the Lord's anger. And the Lord's wrath is like a staff in the Assyrian's hands. The Assyrian is given power to "take the spoil and take the prey," this is clearly economical, he is taking the money, the wealth of the country and the effect of it on the people is as being trampled down like mud in the streets. The wording here is not implying death (such as hewn down), it does not imply murder, mass genocide;

it describes economic slavery. This is why the prophets of God, for the better part of a century, have pleaded with members of the church to get out of debt and stand independent. This is made even clearer later in the chapter (that this isn't physical death).

**Back to Isaiah 10 (2 Nephi 20)**

**7** Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but in his heart it is to destroy and cut off nations not a few.

The goal of the modern Assyrian is not to obey God, he thinks that he is doing his own thing, that he is his own master, but the Lord here says that he will use the Assyrian. The Assyrian's motives are to cut off nations, and not just a few, as many as possible if not all nations. We call this globalism; the cutting off and removing national power to a global whole. The Assyrian is the ultimate globalist who thinks that he is bringing about a global reign when in reality he is being used like a tool in the Lord's hands in preparation for the cleansing of America.

**Back to Isaiah 10 (2 Nephi 20)**

**8** For he saith: Are not my princes altogether kings?

**9** Is not Calno as Carchemish? Is not Hamath as Arpad? Is not Samaria as Damascus?

**10** As my hand hath founded the kingdoms of the idols, and whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria;

The rationale of the Assyrian for consuming this power, for destroying nations and creating globalism is "aren't my princes ***like*** kings?" Why would such a rationale be needed? Because these people ***aren't*** kings! The modern versions of "kings" would be leaders of nations, or elected officials. Unelected representatives in dark rooms and chambers with likeminded people plotting to rule the world is a very textbook definition/example of Gadianton robbers. Gadianton robbers need to justify among themselves a right to rule so they say "aren't we here, princes, rich people, CEOs, generals, etc., aren't we ***like*** kings? The presidents of Facebook, YouTube, Google, Amazon, aren't we like kings?" They then brag about their hands creating kingdoms of idols and how their power exceeded that of the countries of the day, America, England etc. We learn in the previous chapters of Isaiah that idol worship is not just things made from wood and silver but anything made by our hands that we worship. The Lord says, "for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). It is very clear that the modern Assyrian is the leader of a group of people who have created the idols in our hands that we worship today.

**Back to Isaiah 10 (2 Nephi 20)**

**11** Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and to her idols?

This one stings a bit, so maybe you should reread it a few times… The Lord is asking "Shall I not do unto Jerusalem and her Idols like I have done unto Samaria and her idols?" Jerusalem taking its dualism today in the form of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its members as well as America and its citizens…

Many "Saints" reading this today would respond, "Of course the Lord will treat His Saints in Utah completely addicted to Babylon and their idolatry different than the rest of the world!" but this is dangerously false.

**Doctrine and Covenants 112**

> **23** Verily, verily, I say unto you, darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the people, and all flesh has become corrupt before my face.
>
> **24** Behold, vengeance cometh speedily upon the inhabitants of the earth, a day of wrath, a day of burning, a day of desolation, of weeping, of mourning, and of lamentation; and as a whirlwind it shall come upon all the face of the earth, saith the Lord.
>
> **25** And upon my house shall it begin, and from my house shall it go forth, saith the Lord;
>
> **26** First among those among you, saith the Lord, who have professed to know my name and have not known me, and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house, saith the Lord.

**Back to Isaiah 10 (2 Nephi 20)**

**12** Wherefore it shall come to pass that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion and upon Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks.

The Lord then gives the timeframe of when he will bring his judgement upon the Assyrian. He specifies that the Saints of God will be in bondage to the Assyrian until the Lord has finished his whole work upon Mount Zion, which is the New Jerusalem. What is the Lord's work upon Mount Zion and New Jerusalem? Building the temple in New Jerusalem, organizing and sealing the 144,000 and establishing the new government/kingdom of God. Where are all of these events discussed? Revelation chapter 7, and it is also discussed in Daniel chapter 7:13 and 14. When do these events take place? The prophet Joseph Smith asked the same question: "What time are the things spoken of in [chapter 7 of Revelation] to be accomplished? Answer: They are to be accomplished in the sixth thousand years, ***or*** the opening of the sixth seal" (D&C 77:10). It is clear from this evidence that the event that marks the beginning of the end of the Assyrian is the opening of the 7th seal in heaven.

**Back to Isaiah 10 (2 Nephi 20)**

**13** For he saith: By the strength of my hand and by my wisdom I have done these things; for I am prudent; and I have moved the borders of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man;

**14** And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people; and as one gathereth eggs that are left have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped.

This is the Assyrian, once again, bragging about what he has done. He brags that, with his intellect and prudence, he has destroyed nations, moved borders, and robbed the people of their riches. His arrogance is so intense that he even compares himself to war heroes, even though he clearly has never fought in war. He describes robbing the world like robbing a bird's nest of its eggs, and while he did it, the bird didn't even move its wing, open its mouth or peep—there was not even a little fight. Once again, this clearly identifies the Assyrian's warfare as economic warfare.

Another one of the "riches" being robbed from "the nest" would clearly be the bird's children. Once again, the defining feature of this event is that the birds are having their nests robbed—meaning their riches, the things they should hold the most dear, their money, their land, their very children—and their response is the defining feature of this day—"they don't even move the wing, or open the mouth, or peep"… Once again, going back to the Nobleman and His Olive Trees from earlier:

"And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive trees."

They didn't fight back, they didn't move the wing, they didn't even peep… no, they simply "fled"…

**Hugh Nibley**

> There comes a time when the general defilement of a society becomes so great that the rising generation is put under undue pressure and cannot be said to have a fair choice between the way of light and the way of darkness. When such a point is reached the cup of iniquity is full, and the established order that has passed the point of no return and neither can nor will change its ways must be removed physically and forcibly if necessary from the earth, whether by war, plague, famine, or upheavals of nature (Mormon 2:13–15).
>
> (*Collected Works of Hugh Nibley,* Vol. 6, Part. 5, Ch. 11, p. 140)

**Elder Ezra Taft Benson**

> We must love our young people, whether they are in righteousness or in error. In this way we can give them a chance to discern and to learn. But we must also give them a fair choice. Today many are not succeeding.
>
> Yes, "There comes a time when the general defilement of a society becomes so great that the rising generation is put under undue pressure and cannot be said to have a fair choice between the Way of Light and the Way of Darkness."
>
> ("Satan's Thrust—Youth," *Ensign,* December 1971)

**The Family Proclamation**

> We warn that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God. Further, we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets.

This time period is marked with parents who don't fight back; they don't move the wing, they don't even peep in protest as their nest is robbed… Some go as far as to join the marches advocating the disintegration of the family—defilement of society in its final death throws.

**Back to Isaiah 10 (2 Nephi 20)**

**15** Shall the ax boast itself against him that heweth therewith? Shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? As if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself as if it were no wood!

This is the Lord again speaking and the Lord is reminding the reader and the Assyrian that the Assyrian is merely a tool in the hand of the Lord like an axe or a saw in the hand of a lumberjack and boasting of its own strength is folly.

**Back to Isaiah 10 (2 Nephi 20)**

**16** Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, send among his fat ones, leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire.

**17** And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame, and shall burn and shall devour his thorns and his briers in one day;

**18** And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both soul and body; and they shall be as when a standard-bearer fainteth.

A lot is going on in these verses. First, to send leanness among his fat ones, within the context of the time period we are clearly in, refers to the 7-year famine (Ether 13).

The second thing that is taking place here is the Lord "kindling a burning," or in other words, the Lord is starting a fire with "kindling."

**kindling**

*noun*

1. Easily ignited material, such as dry sticks of wood, used to start a fire
2. The bringing forth of young
3. The act of causing to burn; setting on fire

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

> **55** And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;
>
> **56** And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard

**Heber C. Kimball**

> … Take the boys here, the sons of our brethren and sisters, and you may cut them into inch pieces, and they will not forsake this cause, but they will defend it to the last. Some of them may be rough, and perhaps some of them do not pray much, but send them into the vineyard, and then you will see them shew forth the power that is in them. At present the Prophet Joseph's boys lay apparently in a state of slumber, everything seems to be perfectly calm with them, but by and by God will wake them up, and they will roar like the thunders of Mount Sinai.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 4, Discourse1)

**Doctrine and Covenants 103**

> **15** Behold, I say unto you, the redemption of Zion must needs come by power;
>
> **16** Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel.
>
> **17** For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ye must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm.
>
> **18** ***And as your fathers were led at the first, even so shall the redemption of Zion be.***
>
> **19** Therefore, let not your hearts faint, for I say not unto you as I said unto your fathers: Mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence.
>
> **20** But I say unto you: Mine angels shall go up before you, and also my presence, and in time ye shall possess the goodly land.
>
> **21** Verily, verily I say unto you, that my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., is the man to whom I likened the servant to whom the Lord of the vineyard spake in the parable which I have given unto you.
>
> **22** Therefore let my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., say unto the strength of my house, my young men and the middle aged—Gather yourselves together unto the land of Zion, upon the land which I have bought with money that has been consecrated unto me.
>
> **23** And let all the churches send up wise men with their moneys, and purchase lands even as I have commanded them.
>
> **24** And inasmuch as mine enemies come against you to drive you from my goodly land, which I have consecrated to be the land of Zion, even from your own lands after these testimonies, which ye have brought before me against them, ye shall curse them;
>
> **25** And whomsoever ye curse, I will curse, and ye shall avenge me of mine enemies.
>
> **26** And my presence shall be with you even in avenging me of mine enemies, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.

**1 Nephi 22**

> **17** Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be pre-

served, even unto the destruction of their ***enemies by fire.*** Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, ***even if it so be as by fire.***

**2 Nephi 30**

**10** For the time speedily cometh that the Lord God shall cause a great division among the people, and the wicked will he destroy; and he will spare his people, yea, even if it so be that he must destroy the wicked ***by fire.***

**Exodus 13**

**21** And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in ***a pillar of fire,*** to give them light; to go by day and night:

**22** He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor ***the pillar of fire*** by night, from before the people.

**Numbers 14**

**14** And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou LORD art among this people, that thou LORD art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in ***a pillar of fire*** by night.

**3 Nephi 24**

**1** ... Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.

**2** But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like ***a refiner's fire,*** and like fuller's soap.

**3** And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver ...

**Back to Isaiah 10 (2 Nephi 20)**

**19** And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them.

**20** And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them, but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.

**21** The remnant shall return, yea, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God.

**22** For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return; the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness.

**23** For the Lord God of Hosts shall make a consumption, even determined in all the land.

**Doctrine and Covenants 33**

**4** And my vineyard has become corrupted every whit; and there is none which doeth good ***save it be a few;*** and they err in many instances because of priestcrafts, all having corrupt minds.

**2 Nephi 28**

**14** They wear stiff necks and high heads; yea, and because of pride, and wickedness, and abominations, and whoredoms, they have all gone astray ***save it be a few,*** who are the humble followers of Christ; nevertheless, they are led, that in many instances they do err because they are taught by the precepts of men.

**3 Nephi 6**

**14** And thus there became a great inequality in all the land, insomuch that the church began to be broken up; yea, insomuch that in the thirtieth year the church was broken up in all the land save it were among ***a few*** of the Lamanites who were converted unto the true faith; and they would not depart from it, for they were firm, and steadfast, and immovable, willing with all diligence to keep the commandments of the Lord.

**15** Now the cause of this iniquity of the people was this—Satan had great power, unto the stirring up of the people to do all manner of iniquity, and to the puffing them up with pride, tempting them to seek for power, and authority, and riches, and the vain things of the world.

**3 Nephi 7**

**21** And it came to pass that the thirty and first year did pass away, and there were ***but few*** who were converted unto the Lord; but as many as were converted did truly signify unto the people that they had been visited by the power and Spirit of God, which was in Jesus Christ, in whom they believed.

**1 Nephi 14**

**12** And it came to pass that I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and ***its numbers were few,*** because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God, were also upon all the face of the earth; ***and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small,*** because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw.

**13** And it came to pass that I beheld that the great mother of abominations did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God.

**14** And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.

**15** And it came to pass that I beheld that the wrath of God was poured out upon that great and abominable church, insomuch that there were wars and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth.

**Jacob 5**

**70** And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard sent his servant; and the servant went and did as the Lord had commanded him, and brought other servants; ***and they were few.***

**71** And the Lord of the vineyard said unto them: Go to, and labor in the vineyard, with your might. For behold, this is the last time that I shall nourish my vineyard; for the end is nigh at hand, and the season speedily cometh; and if ye labor with your might with me ye shall have joy in the fruit which I shall lay up unto myself against the time which will soon come.

**72** And it came to pass that the servants did go and labor with their mights; and the Lord of the vineyard labored also with them; and they did obey the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard in all things.

**73** And there began to be the natural fruit again in the vineyard; and the natural branches began to grow and thrive exceedingly; and the wild branches began to be plucked off and to be cast away; and they did keep the root and the top thereof equal, according to the strength thereof.

**74** And thus they labored, with all diligence, according to the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard, even until the bad had been cast away out of the vineyard, and the Lord had preserved unto himself that the trees had become again the natural fruit; and they became like unto one body; and the fruits were equal; and the Lord of the vineyard had preserved unto himself the natural fruit, which was most precious unto him from the beginning.

Isaiah 5:1–7 goes over this exact same thing.

**Back to Isaiah 10 (2 Nephi 20)**

**24** Therefore, thus saith the Lord God of Hosts: O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian; he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt.

**25** For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.

Here, the Lord concludes with his comfort to the Saints by promising them, firstly, that this will simply be "after the manner of Egypt." This is the confirmation it will be slavery (economical), not genocide or extermination, as discussed earlier in this chapter. The second thing this comfort includes is the promise of deliverance—that eventually the bands will be removed by this remnant, by the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem.

**Doctrine and Covenants 113**

**7** Questions by Elias Higbee: What is meant by the command in Isaiah, 52d chapter, 1st verse, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion—and what people had Isaiah reference to?

**8** He had reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of priesthood to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel; and to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage; also to return to that power which she had lost.

**9** What are we to understand by Zion loosing herself from the bands of her neck; 2d verse?

**10** We are to understand that the scattered remnants are exhorted to return to the Lord from whence they have fallen; which if they do, the promise of the Lord is that he will speak to them, or give them revelation. See the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses. The bands of her neck are the curses of God upon her, or the remnants of Israel in their scattered condition among the Gentiles.

**Back to Isaiah 10 (2 Nephi 20)**

**26** And the Lord of Hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb; and as his rod was upon the sea so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.

**27** And it shall come to pass in that day that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.

What was the scourge and slaughter of Midian at the rock or Oreb? This is Gideon, Gideon who slew the Midianites, Gideon who through miraculous means and only three-hundred men defeated the enemy of one hundred and thirty-five thousand. Think about that. The Lord says he will work with "a few/remnant" to work the Redemption of Zion and break the yoke, just as it was with Gideon, who did it with three-hundred men.

Gideon's army started with thirty-two thousand, twenty-two thousand were too scared which left only ten thousand, which was further lowered by exact obedience and battle-readiness down to the three-hundred who performed the miracle.

Elder Pratt believed that the redemption of Zion would see thousands, and tens of thousands of priesthood—maybe even thirty-two thousand. According to the Lord however, it will resemble more of Gideon's experience. We can take that for what it is worth.

**Back to Isaiah 10 (2 Nephi 20)**

**28** He is come to Aiath, he is passed to Migron; at Michmash he hath laid up his carriages.

**29** They are gone over the passage; they have taken up their lodging at Geba; Ramath is afraid; Gibeah of Saul is fled.

**30** Lift up the voice, O daughter of Gallim; cause it to be heard unto Laish, O poor Anathoth.

**31** Madmenah is removed; the inhabitants of Gebim gather themselves to flee.

**32** As yet shall he remain at Nob that day; he shall shake his hand against the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.

**33** Behold, the Lord, the Lord of Hosts shall lop the bough with terror; and the high ones of stature shall be hewn down; and the haughty shall be humbled.

**34** And he shall cut down the thickets of the forests with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one.

This is once again referring to the modern-day Assyrian being able to push himself "to the neck" but then is driven back for the same reason—"God is with us." This is explained in Isaiah Chapter 8 verses 8–10 (found in Understanding Isaiah: Chapter Four in this book)

## Isaiah Chapter 11 (2 Nephi 21)

**Isaiah 11 (2 Nephi 21)**

*The stem of Jesse (Christ) will judge in righteousness—The knowledge of God will cover the earth in the Millennium—The Lord will raise an ensign and gather Israel.*

**1** And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

**2** And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;

**3** And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears.

**4** But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

**5** And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

This chapter is very closely tied with the previous chapter. In it we learn more about the "modern day Gideon" who will work with the Lord during this entire process.

There are four things that you need to understand in this chapter: the stem of Jesse, the rod, the branch and the root of Jesse—all of these deal with either the Lord or the servant who will be, once again, the modern-day Gideon who is doing this work with the Lord.

### The Stem of Jesse

**Doctrine and Covenants 113**

**1** Who is the Stem of Jesse spoken of in the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, and 5th verses of the 11th chapter of Isaiah?

**2** Verily thus saith the Lord: It is Christ.

### The Branch

**Bruce R. McConkie**

'Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.' (Jer. 23:3–6.) That is to say, the King who shall reign personally upon the earth during the Millennium shall be the Branch who grew out of the house of David. He shall exe-

cute judgment and justice in all the earth because he is the Lord Jehovah, even him whom we call Christ.

(*The Promised Messiah: The First Coming of Christ* [1978], pp. 192–93)

**Elder Erastus Snow**

The prophet Isaiah in the 11th chapter of his book says: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:"

"And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;"

"And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:"

"But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."

I understand this to have reference to our Savior who, after the flesh, was a descendant of Jesse, Jesse being the father of King David. Out of the stock of Jesse came the royal house that not only ruled in Israel anciently, but the Savior, who is appointed of His Father to be King of Kings and Lord of Lords, because He is anointed to be the Savior of mankind, ***and when He comes the second time, according to the revelations of St. John, He will have the name I have mentioned.***

("How Judgment Should Be Formed, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses,* Volume 25, p. 194)

## The Rod

**Doctrine and Covenants 113**

**3** What is the rod spoken of in the first verse of the 11th chapter of Isaiah, that should come of the Stem of Jesse?

**4** Behold, thus saith the Lord: ***It is a servant in the hands of Christ,*** who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, or of the house of Joseph, on whom there is laid much power.

## The Root

**Doctrine and Covenants 113**

**5** What is the root of Jesse spoken of in the 10th verse of the 11th chapter?

**6** Behold, thus saith the Lord, it is a descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph, unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days.

**D&C 113:3–6. Who Are the "Rod" and the "Root" Spoken of by Isaiah?**

One might assume "that the 'rod' was Joseph Smith, believing that the Prophet, out of modesty, hesitated to name himself directly. None of us would question that Joseph was destined to become a great 'servant in the hands of Christ'. Moreover, if we assume that he was the 'rod' or 'servant', observe how very well such an identification fits in with Moroni's mission of explaining to the latter-day Prophet his part in Isaiah's great vision of the future. As the 'rod' or 'servant in the hands of Christ', Joseph Smith fits naturally into Isaiah's prophecy, and it is easy to understand why Moroni quoted and explained Isaiah 11 to him. [See JS—H 1:40.]

"Despite this reasoning, we still have the uneasy feeling that better proof of Joseph Smith's being the 'rod' should be available. I believe there is better proof and that it is found in Doctrine and Covenants 113:5–6. …

"In order to assess this explanation intelligently, let us turn to Isaiah 11:10: [quoted].

"A closer translation of the original may be given here:

"'And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign [sign, signal] of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting place [refuge, residence] shall be glorious.'

"Quite obviously the 'root of Jesse' is a man, a descendant of Jesse and Joseph (as the Lord explains), who seems to have a great mission to perform in connection with gathering the remnant of Israel, as explained in Isaiah 11:11–16. [Most likely] the 'rod' of verse 1 and the 'root of Jesse' of verse 10 refer to the same man, Joseph Smith. If the 'rod' in D&C 113:4 is the 'servant in the hands of Christ, who is partly a descendant of Jesse as well as of Ephraim, or of the house of Joseph,' note that in verse 6 he seems to be more closely defined as a 'descendant of Jesse, as well as of Joseph, *unto whom rightly belongs the priesthood, and the keys of the kingdom, for an ensign, and for the gathering of my people in the last days.'* (Italics added.) Who better fits the description of the words in italics than Joseph Smith (see D&C 27:12–13; 86:8–11; 110:1–16; 115:18–19). He rightly holds the priesthood and its keys by lineage, and surely no one disputes the fact that the keys of the 'gathering of my people' were conferred on him by Moses in the Kirtland Temple, April 3, 1836." (Sperry, "The Problem of the 'Rod' and the 'Root of Jesse' in Isaiah 11," *Improvement Era,* Oct. 1966, pp. 869, 914–15.)

In certain scriptures Christ is referred to as the "Root of David" (Revelation 5:5; 22:16). According to Elder Bruce R. McConkie, "This designation signifies that he who was the Son of David was also before David, was pre-eminent above him, and was the root or source from which the great king in Israel gained his kingdom and power" (*Mormon Doctrine,* p. 657; see also Matthew 22:44–45).

The explanation of Isaiah 11:10 given in Doctrine and Covenants 113 implies that while Christ is the root of David, he is not the root of Jesse mentioned by Isaiah. There are two reasons for this conclusion. First, the Lord through the Prophet Joseph Smith in verse 2 identifies Christ as the stem of Jesse; he does not identify Christ as the root of Jesse. Second, verse 6 indicates that the root of Jesse is a servant of Christ to whom keys are given "in the last days" to gather Christ's people.

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), pp. 283–284)

**Back to Isaiah 11 (2 Nephi 21)**

**6** The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

**7** And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

**8** And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den.

**9** They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

**2 Nephi 21:6–9. Peace through Knowledge of the Lord**

Isaiah prophesied of the great millennial day when peace and love would cover the earth (see 2 Nephi 21:6–9). When that day comes, "the enmity of man, and the enmity of beasts, yea, the enmity of all flesh, shall cease" (D&C 101:26).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (1996), PDF Version, p. 36)

**2 Nephi 21:9. "The Earth Shall Be Full of the Knowledge of the Lord"**

**Elder Dallin H. Oaks** taught that the outpouring of knowledge from the heavens includes a knowledge of God's ways, an increase in the

presence of the Holy Ghost, and an understanding of the doctrine of the priesthood:

"In our day we are experiencing an explosion of knowledge about the world and its people. But the people of the world are not experiencing a comparable expansion of knowledge about God and his plan for his children. On that subject, what the world needs is not more scholarship and technology but more righteousness and revelation.

"I long for the day prophesied by Isaiah when 'the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord' (Isaiah 11:9; 2 Nephi 21:9). In an inspired utterance, the Prophet Joseph Smith described the Lord's 'pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints' (D&C 121:33). This will not happen for those whose 'hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men' (121:35). Those who fail to learn and use 'principles of righteousness' (121:36) will be left to themselves to kick against those in authority, 'to persecute the saints, and to fight against God' (121:38). In contrast, the Lord makes this great promise to the faithful:

"'The doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven.

"'The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness and truth; and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever' (D&C 121:45–46)" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 38–39; or *Ensign,* May 1989, 30).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

**(13-59) Isaiah 11:9. "The Earth Shall Be Full of the Knowledge of the Lord"**

The sacred knowledge of God will prevail on earth (see Smith, *Teachings,* p. 93), truth from which no one can hide. **Elder Orson Pratt** wrote: "The knowledge of God will then cover the earth as the waters cover the mighty deep. There will be no place of ignorance, no place of darkness, no place for those that will not serve God. Why? Because Jesus, the Great Creator, and also the Great Redeemer, will be himself on the earth, and his holy angels will be on the earth, and all the resurrected Saints that have died in former dispensations will all come forth, and they will be on the earth. What a happy earth this creation will be, when this purifying process shall come, and the earth be filled with the knowledge of God as the waters cover the great deep! What a change! Travel, then, from one end of the earth to another, you can find no wicked man, no drunken man, no man to blaspheme the name of the Great Creator, no one to lay hold on his neighbor's goods, and steal them, no one to commit whoredoms—for all who commit whoredoms will be thrust down to hell, saith the Lord God Almighty, and all persons who commit sin will be speedily visited by the judgments of the Almighty!" (In *Journal of Discourses,* 21:325.)

The promises of revelation for this great era are outlined in the Doctrine and Covenants (see D&C 101:32–34).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 149)

These verses and this time period refer to the time period after the Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord, for it isn't until after this day that the earth is full of knowledge. Joseph Smith explained that when John the Revelator saw that the earth was turned to a sea of glass, he was referring to the world being full of knowledge. And the world was full of knowledge because:

**Doctrine and Covenants 130**

**9** This earth, in its sanctified and immortal state, will be made like unto crystal and will be a Urim and Thummim to the inhabitants who dwell thereon, whereby all things pertaining to an inferior kingdom, or all kingdoms of a lower order, will be manifest to those who dwell on it; and this earth will be Christ's.

The world isn't turned into this state until The Great and Dreadful Day which doesn't happen until years after Adam-ondi-Ahman and years after the Battle of Armageddon in Old Jerusalem.

That being said, those living in the New Jerusalem will grow up as "calves in the stall" (1 Nephi 22:24) and "death will flee from them" (Doctrine and Covenants 101:29) and "nothing will be withheld from them" (Doctrine and Covenants 101:32, 121:28) etc. so they will be living in a state apart from the rest of the world at the time. "Zion have I blessed, but the residue have I cursed" (Moses 7:20).

**Back to Isaiah 11 (2 Nephi 21)**

**10** And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious.

We have already identified who the root of Jesse is. The manual says "this root shall stand for an ensign of the people." The root clearly is the ensign, they are synonymous. This is Joseph Smith Jr., as we read in Doctrine and Covenants 103, who will gather the strength of the Lord's house and who will be the instrument in the Lord's hands to bring this work to completion.

**Back to Isaiah 11 (2 Nephi 21)**

**11** And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

**12** And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

**13** The envy of Ephraim also shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.

**14** But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines towards the west; they shall spoil them of the east together; they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.

**15** And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind he shall shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dry shod.

**16** And there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria, like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

There are a lot of erroneous interpretations of these verses. Instead of explaining what these verses are not talking about, I will simply explain what they are talking about and let you judge for yourself. Joseph Smith is the ensign. The ensign that he lifts here is not The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but rather the Church of the Firstborn and the New Jerusalem. That is the context of these verses—he will be that modern day Gideon, the man like unto Moses in that day.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are the fishers, we are part of the first time the Lord set his hand to recover his people. The Lord here is describing the second time, the upgrade—the hunters. Joseph Smith is raised, the New Jerusalem redeemed and with the ensign lifted the ten tribes will come. This event is described in:

**Doctrine and Covenants 133**

**26** And they who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord; and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves; and they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence.

**27** And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep.

**28** Their enemies shall become a prey unto them,

**29** And in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water; and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land.

**30** And they shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim, my servants.

**31** And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence.

**32** And there shall they fall down and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim.

**33** And they shall be filled with songs of everlasting joy.

**34** Behold, this is the blessing of the everlasting God upon the tribes of Israel, and the richer blessing upon the head of Ephraim and his fellows.

Jeremiah described these events in:

**Jeremiah 16**

**14** ¶ Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

**15** But, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

**16** Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

Isaiah is describing the same events as the verses above. The hunters which are being sent out are the Lord in his second time recovering the remnant of his people. The hunters are the 144,000 whose job it is to bring people into the Church of the Firstborn and into the New Jerusalem program. If that ensign is not first raised, the 144,000 have no church and no location to bring people into. Orson Pratt describes this same series of events in many locations: the ten tribes returning as a body, 144,000 being chosen out of all the tribes, the 144,000 then being perfected and purified as silver, and then being sent out to gather the elect one last time.

**Joseph Smith** explained the difference between the first time (i.e., fishing) and the second time (i.e., hunting):

'Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind, which when it was full they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.' For the work of this pattern, behold the seed of Joseph, spreading forth the Gospel net upon the face of the earth, gathering of every kind, that the good may be saved in vessels prepared for that purpose, and the angels will take care of the bad. So shall it be at the end of the world—the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire, and there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 102)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its missionaries are fishers. They cast the net out and see what comes up. They gather the good to the church and drop the bad investigators. The "angels" or 144,000 are hunters. Hunters go for specific targets. Their job is to go specifically to the elect and bring them into the Church of the Firstborn. Unlike the fishers, these 144,000 have both the power to seal people up to salvation as well as cast them into the furnace of fire, i.e. seal them unto damnation. (Doctrine and Covenants 77; 8–11) During the process of the 144,000 going off and preaching in the world, the enmity between Judah and Ephraim will be healed (further proving the time period these events take place in as today, the enmity between Judah and Ephraim is still, very much alive and well).

This is the day of angels and men being coworkers. This is the day that righteousness and truth will sweep the earth as with a flood, and gather out the Lord's elect unto the place appointed by the Lord, a city, which shall be called The New Jerusalem.

## Isaiah Chapter 12 (2 Nephi 22)

**Isaiah 12 (2 Nephi 22)**

*In the millennial day all men will praise the Lord—He will dwell among them.*

**1** And in that day thou shalt say: O Lord, I will praise thee; though thou wast angry with me thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.

**2** Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also has become my salvation.

**3** Therefore, with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

**4** And in that day shall ye say: Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.

**5** Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things; this is known in all the earth.

**6** Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

**Revelation 14**

**1** And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

**2** And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

**3** And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

**4** These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

**5** And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

**6** And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

**7** Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

**8** And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

**92** And angels shall fly through the midst of heaven, crying with a loud voice, sounding the trump of God, saying: Prepare ye, prepare ye, O inhabitants of the earth; for the judgment of our God is come. Behold, and lo, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

**93** And immediately there shall appear a great sign in heaven, and all people shall see it together.

**94** And another angel shall sound his trump, saying: That great church, the mother of abominations, that made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, that persecuteth the saints of God, that shed their blood—she who sitteth upon many waters, and upon the islands of the sea—behold, she is the tares of the earth; she is bound in bundles; her bands are made strong, no man can loose them; therefore, she is ready to be burned. And he shall sound his trump both long and loud, and all nations shall hear it.

**95** And there shall be silence in heaven for the space of half an hour; and immediately after shall the curtain of heaven be unfolded, as a scroll is unfolded after it is rolled up, and the face of the Lord shall be unveiled;

**Doctrine and Covenants 133**

**52** And now the year of my redeemed is come; and they shall mention the loving kindness of their Lord, and all that he has bestowed upon them according to his goodness, and according to his loving kindness, forever and ever.

**53** In all their afflictions he was afflicted. And the angel of his presence saved them; and in his love, and in his pity, he redeemed them, and bore them, and carried them all the days of old;

**54** Yea, and Enoch also, and they who were with him; the prophets who were before him; and Noah also, and they who were before him; and Moses also, and they who were before him;

**55** And from Moses to Elijah, and from Elijah to John, who were with Christ in his resurrection, and the holy apostles, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, shall be in the presence of the Lamb.

**56** And the graves of the saints shall be opened; and they shall come forth and stand on the right hand of the Lamb, when he shall stand upon Mount Zion, and upon the holy city, the New Jerusalem; and they shall sing the song of the Lamb, day and night forever and ever.

**Doctrine and Covenants 84**

**98** Until all shall know me, who remain, even from the least unto the greatest, and shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and shall see eye to eye, and shall lift up their voice, and with the voice together sing this new song, saying:

**99** The Lord hath brought again Zion;
The Lord hath redeemed his people, Israel,
According to the election of grace,
Which was brought to pass by the faith
And covenant of their fathers.

**100** The Lord hath redeemed his people;
And Satan is bound and time is no longer.
The Lord hath gathered all things in one.
The Lord hath brought down Zion from above.
The Lord hath brought up Zion from beneath.

**101** The earth hath travailed and brought forth her strength;
And truth is established in her bowels;
And the heavens have smiled upon her;
And she is clothed with the glory of her God;
For he stands in the midst of his people.

**102** Glory, and honor, and power, and might,
Be ascribed to our God; for he is full of mercy,
Justice, grace and truth, and peace,
Forever and ever, Amen.

**President Russell M. Nelson**

Our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, will perform some of His mightiest works between now and when He comes again. We will see miraculous indications that God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, preside over this Church in majesty and glory. But in coming days, it will not be possible to survive spiritually without the guiding, directing, comforting, and constant influence of the Holy Ghost.

("Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives," General Conference, April 2018)

When the Lord performs these works, ***the*** marvelous work and a wonder, we shall see eye to eye, and we shall sing!

# Isaiah 13–14, 2 Nephi 23–24

## Isaiah Chapter 13 (2 Nephi 23)

**Isaiah 13 (2 Nephi 23)**

*The destruction of Babylon is a type of the destruction at the Second Coming—It will be a day of wrath and vengeance—Babylon (the world) will fall forever.*

**1** The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.

We learned in the previous chapters, of the Assyrian, and what did we learn? We learned that the burden of the Assyrian was taken off from Ancient Israel due to Babylon being a scourge to the Assyrian. As far as things to come we know that the Assyrian will cause problems "even to the neck of New Jerusalem" until the Lord goes on the offense. Babylon appears to once again take control or resume the reign over the Assyrian—in other words, we are moving from Isaiah into the Book of Revelation. It isn't a coincidence that Nephi was shown everything, but was told only to write up to a certain point, at which point John would write the remainder, and Nephi takes us up to Isaiah chapter 14 and then stops—the same time period that the focus changes from "Assyria" as a type to "Babylon" as a type. This chapter starts off by identifying that the burden moving forward is that of *Babylon,* not *the Assyrian.* It's also interesting to note that Babylon refers to *the economic world generally* which confirms the idea that the Assyrian was a local problem to just America and the New Jerusalem. When the Lord goes on the offense, it's a cleansing of America first, Gentiles second, and finally the whole world.

**Back to Isaiah 13 (2 Nephi 23)**

**2** Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain, exalt the voice unto them, shake the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles.

**3** I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones, for mine anger is not upon them that rejoice in my highness.

**4** The noise of the multitude in the mountains like as of a great people, a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together, the Lord of Hosts mustereth the hosts of the battle.

We have already identified that this "banner" or "ensign" is Joseph Smith and the New Jerusalem. Joseph's Boys, the 144,000 and the Church of the Firstborn are all a part of the "mighty ones" and "sanctified ones." Some erroneously claim that this is referencing all Latter-day Saints, this is false. We learn clearly from the study of the previous chapters as well as Doctrine and Covenants and other sources that the Lord visits His own church first in his anger (D&C 112: 23–26). This event of the Lord visiting His church first, is taught in a multitude of ways, the most common of which is the wheat and the tares. Both are allowed to grow up together, side by side, in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but eventually they will be separated in the Lord's anger. President Nelson in his April 2020 *Ensign* article stated, "The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do (see Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7)." What is Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7? It is the Lord explaining the wheat and the tares. In Isaiah, the Lord says his anger is not upon those who are with Him. He also refers to those people as "mighty ones" and "sanctified ones."

**Revelation 7**

**9** After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

**10** And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

**11** And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

**12** Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

**13** And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

**14** And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

**15** Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

**16** They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

**17** For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Once again, these verses confirm a number of things:

1. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is visited first in the Lord's anger (i.e., "great tribulation").
2. There is a period of great tribulation (D&C 88:91) in which the Church of the Firstborn, those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, are created.
3. The 10 tribes return and 12,000 from each tribe are chosen for the 144,000 (verses 1–8 of Revelation 7).
4. During this period of tribulation the Assyrian shows up and gets even to the neck of New Jerusalem.
5. Christ appears in the midst of New Jerusalem (verse 9 or Daniel 7:13–14 or D&C 88:92).
6. The 7th seal is opened and there is silence in heaven even for about the space of half an hour (Revelation 8:1, D&C 88:95) before the Great and Dreadful Day.

**Back to Isaiah 13 (2 Nephi 23)**

**5** They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, yea, the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

To get a clear understanding of what is happening in this verse, we need to once again reread D&C 88:91–95. Looking at the order of the events discussed above, rereading D&C 88:91–95, we learn that there is another event that takes place at or around the opening of the 7th seal (#6), and that is: "And immediately there shall appear a great sign in heaven, and all people shall see it together" (D&C 88:93). Of the events leading up to and including this sign, what did **Joseph Smith** say?

There will be wars and rumors of wars, signs in the heavens above and on the earth beneath, the sun turned into darkness and the moon to blood, earthquakes in divers places, the seas heaving beyond their bounds; then will appear one grand sign of the Son of Man in heaven. But what will the world do? They will say it is a planet, a comet, etc. But

> the Son of man will come as the sign of the coming of the Son of Man, which will be as the light of the morning cometh out of the east.
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 286–287)

It's also explained in verse 5 that the Lord's coming (the Great and Dreadful Day) is made manifest by this sign when it says "yea, the Lord." It also says that the weapons of his indignation are coming from this same location, "the end of heaven."

This leaves us with the question, who are the "they" that are coming from the "end of heaven"?

One of Joseph Smith's close associates, Wandle Mace, claimed that the Prophet said that this sign would be the return of the city of Enoch (cf. Moses 7:62–63). We have a quote from **Joseph Smith** recorded by **Wandle Mace,** "When Enoch and his city was taken away, a portion of earth was taken and would again be restored."

> Joseph Smith when describing the sign was reported to have also said that while the wicked will not understand its true significance—attributing it to a natural cause—the righteous will know what it means. And the coming of the Son of Man will be like the dawning of the morning sun that moves along gradually from the east until it reaches unto the west. In a manner similar to the sun, this sign will be small at first but will gradually increase until it is "all in a blaze" and every eye sees it.
>
> (*The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet,* p. 181)

When Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith, Joseph Smith recorded:

**Joseph Smith—History 1**

> **36** After telling me these things, he commenced quoting the prophecies of the Old Testament. He first quoted part of the third chapter of Malachi; and he quoted also the fourth or last chapter of the same prophecy, though with a little variation from the way it reads in our Bibles. Instead of quoting the first verse as it reads in our books, he quoted it thus:
>
> **37** For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall burn as stubble; ***for they that come shall burn them,*** saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

So what have we learned?

1. The 7th seal is opened in heaven.
2. The sign of the Son of Man appears, which is the city of Enoch returning.
3. The sign will get brighter and brighter as it gradually approaches.
4. When the silence in heaven ends the Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord will occur. At such event, the Saints of God will be caught up from the earth (all living and dead) and will meet the people of the City of Enoch coming down. The world will be made whole and all telestial destroyed ***by those that came.***

Does this understanding jibe with the scriptures? Yes. In Moses chapter 7:59 Enoch asks the Lord, "wilt thou not come again upon the Earth?" The Lord answers him in verse 60, "as I live, even so I will come." The Lord then says but before the Great and Dreadful Day when the earth will rest, some events need to happen:

1. "The heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth: and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, but my people will I preserve" (Moses 7:61).
2. "Righteousness will I send down out of heaven" (Moses 7:62). This is referencing Joseph Smith being resurrected.
3. "Truth will I send forth out of the earth" (Moses 7:62). We know that Joseph Smith will call the 10 tribes home. The Lord here says that they will come forth "out of the earth." Whether or not they will be literally coming from inside the earth or are simply "being revealed" at that time, we don't know. We do know, however, that they are hidden to this day and will not be revealed until that time.
4. "And righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City… called Zion, a New Jerusalem" (Moses 7:62). Once again, this confirms that Joseph Smith has to return and that he is the righteousness spoken of, because the New Jerusalem has not been built upon the American continent yet.
5. The people in the New Jerusalem prepare for the Great and Dreadful Day (Moses 7:62).
6. "And the Lord said unto Enoch: Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there, and we will receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other" (Moses 7:63). The Great and Dreadful Day occurs ***after*** the half an hour of silence, and Enoch and his people are a part of that event.

Once again, there might be some "assumed knowledge" on the part of the reader here as these chapters are placed after "Section III: The Marvelous Work and Wonder." If you are confused about any of the above, or desire more references, please reread that section.

**Back to Isaiah 13 (2 Nephi 23)**

**6** Howl ye, for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.

**7** Therefore shall all hands be faint, every man's heart shall melt;

**8** And they shall be afraid; pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames.

**9** Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

**10** For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

**11** And I will punish the world for evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; …

**(B-5) Geographical Designations of Zion:**

> In his vision of the future, Enoch saw that great tribulations would make necessary a means of preserving the Lord's people upon the earth in the last days. That means is to gather the elect in Zion (see Moses 7:61–62). The Doctrine and Covenants declares that in addition to the true "center place," the stakes of Zion would also be "for a defense, and for a refuge from the storm, and from wrath when it shall be poured out without mixture upon the whole earth" (D&C 115:6). The **Prophet Joseph Smith** taught the same principle when he said that "without Zion, and a place of deliverance, we must fall; because the time is near when the sun will be darkened, and the moon turn to blood, and the stars fall from heaven, and the earth reel to and fro. Then, if this is the case, and if we are not sanctified and gathered to the places God has appointed, with all our former professions and our great love for the Bible, we must fall; we cannot stand; we cannot be saved; for God will gather out His Saints from the Gentiles, and then comes desolation and destruction, and none can escape except the pure in heart who are gathered." (*History of the Church,* 2:52.)
>
> On another occasion, the Prophet gave the following admonition:
>
> "We ought to have the building up of Zion as our greatest object. When wars come, we shall have to flee to Zion. The cry is to make haste. The last revelation says, Ye shall not have time to have gone over the earth, until these things come. …

"... The time is soon coming when no man will have any peace but in Zion and her stakes.

"I saw men hunting the lives of their own sons, and brother murdering brother, women killing their own daughters, and daughters seeking the lives of their mothers. I saw armies arrayed against armies. I saw blood, desolation, fires. The Son of Man has said that the mother shall be against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother. These things are at our doors. They will follow the Saints of God from city to city. Satan will rage, and the spirit of the devil is now enraged. I know not how soon these things will take place; but with a view of them, shall I cry peace? No! I will lift up my voice and testify of them. How long you will have good crops, and the famine be kept off, I do not know; when the fig tree leaves, know then that summer is nigh at hand." (*History of the Church,* 3:390–91.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 371)

We've gone over these points of reference enough that by now we should be able to pick apart the word association.

**Back to Isaiah 13 (2 Nephi 23)**

**11** ... I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay down the haughtiness of the terrible.

**12** I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.

This is making reference to the time period discussed previously (Isaiah chapter 3) where seven women will take hold of a single righteous man. Here, we once again read about "haughtiness" being humbled and righteous men being more precious than fine gold. This once again confirms that the man is righteous, and the seven women are clinging to him because he is righteous. The manual says this:

**(14-7) Isaiah 13:11–12. What Was Implied by a Man Being More Precious Than Gold?**

In chapter 13, verses 11–12, Isaiah repeats a refrain used earlier (see Isaiah 4:1), that righteous men will become as difficult to find as precious gold and will be treasured as highly. The wicked will be cleansed from the earth, and the worthy righteous will remain to become the precious jewels in the royal diadem of the Lord (see D&C 60:4; Isaiah 62:1–3). Indeed, the treasure of "the golden wedge of Ophir" (Isaiah 13:12), the rich, gold-producing province of India, is insignificant compared to the worth of one righteous man (compare D&C 18:10).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 153)

**Back to Isaiah 13 (2 Nephi 23)**

**13** Therefore, I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of Hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.

**14** And it shall be as the chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up; and they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land.

**(14-8) Isaiah 13:13. What Was Meant by the Heavens Being Shaken and the Earth Being Removed?**

The prophecy has a literal fulfillment in the latter days. All things are to be restored. The heavens will flee as the earth is brought back to a condition it once enjoyed. The earth will then receive its paradisiacal glory. Its paradisiacal glory is not to be confused with the celestial state that is the eventual destiny of this sphere; it is, rather, the millennial condition wherein all life will enjoy continual peace. (See Joseph Fielding Smith, The Signs of the Times, pp. 34–38.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 153)

The Prophet **Joseph Smith** taught that:

This earth will be rolled back into the presence of God, and crowned with celestial glory.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 181).

This is obviously a progression with the earth potentially moving from its current position to the presence of God just as it moved from the presence of God out. At this point in time, the earth is simply moved back into its paradisiacal glory, but eventually, it will be crowned with Celestial Glory.

**Abraham 5**

**13** Now I, Abraham, saw that it was after the Lord's time, which was after the time of Kolob; for as yet the Gods had not appointed unto Adam his reckoning.

At the time of Adam and Eve in the garden, the "paradisiacal glory," the earth was in a position next to God. After the Fall, the earth was put into a new heavens and a new earth. After the flood, the earth received yet another "new heaven and a new earth."

**2 Peter 3**

**3** Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

**4** And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

**5** For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

**6** Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

**7** But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

**8** But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

...

**12** Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

**13** Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Job also describes the change of the heavens and the earth after the flood:

**Job 26**

**5** Dead things are formed from under the waters, and the inhabitants thereof.

**6** Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering.

**7** He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.

**8** He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them.

**9** He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it.

**10** He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end.

**11** The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof.

**12** He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud.

**13** By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent

**14** Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?

**Brigham Young** taught:

This earthly ball, this little opaque substance thrown off into space, is only a speck in the great universe; and when it's celestialized, it will go back into the presence of God, where it was first framed." He also said, "this earth, when it fell, went millions of miles from the presence of God, and when it returns back it will go millions of miles from its present position to where it came from.

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 9, Discourse 64)

**Back to Isaiah 13 (2 Nephi 23)**

**15** Every one that is proud shall be thrust through; yea, and every one that is joined to the wicked shall fall by the sword.

**16** Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be spoiled and their wives ravished.

**17** Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver and gold, nor shall they delight in it.

**18** Their bows shall also dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eyes shall not spare children.

**19** And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

**20** It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.

**21** But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.

**22** And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come, and her day shall not be prolonged. For I will destroy her speedily; yea, for I will be merciful unto my people, but the wicked shall perish.

**(14-9) Isaiah 13:14–18. What Was Meant by the Medes Destroying Babylon?**

Isaiah declared that as the Medes, those of the higher mountainous country above Babylon, would descend upon the worldly gem of the Euphrates and decimate it, ***so in a spiritual sense a higher power, not interested in wealth, would come upon the Babylon of the latter days and destroy its proud, its wicked, and its confederates*** (see 2 Nephi 23:15).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),

p. 153)

**2 Nephi 23:13–22. Judgments Predicted for the Wicked**

The Lord said, "I will be merciful unto my people [the righteous], but the wicked shall perish" (2 Nephi 23:22). Those who oppose the Lord will witness great devastation prior to and at the Second Coming. Those "joined to the wicked shall fall by the sword" (v. 15), and "their houses shall be spoiled" (v. 16). Their children and wives will also suffer greatly (see vv. 15–16). This is Isaiah's depiction of the great judgments that John the Revelator later saw (see Revelation 9, 11, 16–18).

Remember that the name Babylon has both literal and spiritual meaning (see 2 Nephi 23:19–22). As is the case with many of Isaiah's prophecies, there is a dual fulfillment for this prophecy. Babylon became one of the most glorious cities of the world during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, around 600 B.C. It fell to the Medes and Persians in 539 B.C. and began a long decline. By the time of Christ, Babylon was inhabited only by a few Jews exiled by Roman decree. A hundred years later it was totally desolate and has remained uninhabited to this day.

Babylon is also the name for Satan's kingdom, or the world (see D&C 1:16). In the great judgments that will immediately precede the Second Coming, spiritual Babylon, also known as the church of the devil or the great whore of the earth (see 1 Nephi 14:10, Revelation 17:1–5), will be destroyed and remain in utter desolation during the Millennium.

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (1996), PDF Version, pp. 36–37)

**1 Nephi 13**

**3** And he said unto me: These are the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles.

**4** And it came to pass that I saw among the nations of the Gentiles the formation of a great church.

**5** And the angel said unto me: Behold the formation of a church which is most abominable above all other churches, which slayeth the saints of God, yea, and tortureth them and bindeth them down, and yoketh them with a yoke of iron, and bringeth them down into captivity.

**6** And it came to pass that I beheld this great and abominable church; and I saw the [c]devil that he was the founder of it.

**Footnote 6c devil**

1 Ne. 22:23 (22–23). TG Devil.

**1 Nephi 22**

**22** And the righteous need not fear, for they are those who shall not be confounded. But it is the kingdom of the devil, which shall be built up among the children of men, which kingdom is established among them which are in the flesh—

**23** For the time speedily shall come that all churches which are built up to get gain, and all those who are built up to get power over the flesh, and those who are built up to become popular in the eyes of the world, and those who seek the lusts of the flesh and the things of the world, and to do all manner of iniquity; yea, in fine, all those who belong to the kingdom of the devil are they who need fear, and tremble, and quake; they are those who must be brought low in the dust; they are those who must be consumed as stubble; and this is according to the words of the prophet.

**7** And I also saw gold, and silver, and silks, and scarlets, and fine-twined linen, and all manner of precious clothing; and I saw many harlots.

**8** And the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold the gold, and the silver, and the silks, and the scarlets, and the fine-twined linen, and the precious clothing, and the harlots, are the [a]desires of this great and abominable church.

**Footnote 8a desires**

Rev. 18:19 (10–24); Morm. 8:37 (36–41).

(See below)

**9** And also for the praise of the world do they destroy the saints of God, and bring them down into captivity.

**Revelation 18**

**10** Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

**11** And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:

**12** The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,

**13** And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.

**14** And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.

**15** The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,

**16** And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!

**17** For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,

**18** And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!

**19** And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

**20** Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

**21** And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

**22** And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;

**23** And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

**24** And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

**Mormon 8**

**36** And I know that ye do walk in the pride of your hearts; and there are none save a few only who do not lift themselves up in the pride of their hearts, unto the wearing of very fine apparel, unto envying, and strifes, and malice, and persecutions, and all manner of iniquities; and your churches, yea, even every one, have become polluted because of the pride of your hearts.

**37** For behold, ye do love money, and your substance, and your fine apparel, and the adorning of your churches, more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted.

**38** O ye pollutions, ye hypocrites, ye teachers, who sell yourselves for that which will canker, why have ye polluted the holy church of God? Why are ye ashamed to take upon you the name of Christ? Why do ye not think that greater is the value of an endless happiness than that misery which never dies—because of the praise of the world?

**39** Why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not?

**40** Yea, why do ye build up your secret abominations to get gain, and cause that widows should mourn before the Lord, and also orphans to mourn before the Lord, and also the blood of their fathers and their husbands to cry unto the Lord from the ground, for vengeance upon your heads?

**41** Behold, the sword of vengeance hangeth over you; and the time soon cometh that he avengeth the blood of the saints upon you, for he will not suffer their cries any longer.

**Joseph Smith** declared:

> Down with that of priestcraft,[2] and let all the people say Amen! that the blood of our fathers may not cry from the ground against us.[4]
>
> **Footnotes**
>
> (2) 2 Ne. 26:29 Alma 1:12, 16 D&C 33:4
>
> (4) 3 Ne. 9:11 Morm. 8:40 D&C 136:36 Moses 5:35
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 117)

Only those who have freed themselves from priestcraft, from the desire for wealth, from the vain things of the world, etc. will be amongst "Joseph's Boys," while all the wicked ***"and every one that is joined to the wicked*** shall fall by the sword." Simply being joined to the wicked will be enough, you must cut the ties which bind you to Babylon; you must not "look back," or you shall be turned to salt with the rest—you shall be numbered with them. Thus speaks the prophets.

I repeat... The lines ***"and every one that is joined to the wicked*** shall fall by the sword." and "...would come upon the Babylon of the latter days and destroy its proud, its wicked, ***and its confederates"*** should send shivers down people's spines... You don't even have to be wicked in this regard, you simply have to be ***joined*** with them, ***confederate*** with them... and you will be burned with them... People should really, ***really*** take note of these powerful words from the prophets of God who saw our day and what would become of us... please, with all the energy of my soul, I plead with you to learn this one lesson:

**Doctrine and Covenants 121**

**34** Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?

**35** Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson

## Isaiah Chapter 14 (2 Nephi 24)

**Isaiah 14 (2 Nephi 24)**

*Israel will be gathered and will enjoy millennial rest—Lucifer was cast out of heaven for rebellion—Israel will triumph over Babylon (the world).*

**1** For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land; and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.

**2** And the people shall take them and bring them to their place; yea, from far unto the ends of the earth; and they shall return to their lands of promise. And the house of Israel shall possess them, and the land of the Lord shall be for servants and handmaids; and they shall take them captives unto whom they were captives; and they shall rule over their oppressors.

**3** And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall give thee rest, from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve.

**(14-12) Isaiah 14:2. What Was the Relationship of Israel to the People Spoken of Here?**

The gathering process that restores Israel to her promised lands will be facilitated by other nations (people) who will assist in Israel's return from the ends of the earth. Then these other nations will espouse Israel's cause, and the captive (Israel) will become a ruler over her captors.

> This favored condition will be fully realized in the glorious millennial peace enjoyed by the faithful who have truly conquered Babylon (the world). (see Isaiah 14:3.) In other words, as C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch put it, "Babylon falls that Israel may rise" (*Commentary on the Old Testament,* 7:1:306).
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 153)

This student manual quote can come across a bit strange, as when first reading it one might (correctly) assume that they are giving a history lesson, in which the Jews after being taken captive by Babylon are brought back to Jerusalem (the lands of their inheritances) and are set up as rulers over their old captives, but the student manual then pivots and brings us to "the glorious millennial peace" without much warning. Much like how Matthew 24 can be confusing as it bounces around between the events of the first abomination and the second abomination yet to take place, this student manual attempts to blend and it (frankly) comes across a bit confusing. We do know, historically, that all of those events did in fact take place:

1. The "strangers" assisted the Jews in returning and establishing Jerusalem and Israel.
2. The "strangers" then even defended Israel.
3. Israel became (for a time) a ruler over their old captors.

So where really is the dualism of this prophecy today? Is it found in Old Jerusalem? No… The dualism does not match with the prophetic picture of Jerusalem. Yes, "strangers" (i.e. "The Gentiles") do assist in bringing Judah (not Jacob) back to Israel, but that is where the similarities end, for The Gentiles will not defend Israel at the Battle of Armageddon, they will be in the army attacking it, and Judah is currently not (and will never be) a "ruler over their captors," even for a little bit. So what really is the dualism? Once again, it is the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem… Not to repeat the entire "Redemption of Zion" chapter, let us just say that the Saints of God have been cast out of their "lands of promise" and will return again, by the assistance of "strangers," and these "strangers" are the angels, or our ancestors. These "strangers," or "angels," will defend Israel, even if it so be that the Lord must protect the elect by fire. From The New Jerusalem, the law shall go forth (ruling in the land they were originally captors in).

**3 Nephi 20**

> **16** Then shall ye, who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, go forth among them; and ye shall be in the midst of them who shall be many; and ye shall be among them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, and as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he goeth through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.
>
> **17** Thy hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off.
>
> **18** And I will gather my people together as a man gathereth his sheaves into the floor.
>
> **19** For I will make my people with whom the Father hath covenanted, yea, I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass. And thou shalt beat in pieces many people; and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. And behold, I am he who doeth it.
>
> **20** And it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that the sword of my justice shall hang over them at that day; and except they repent it shall fall upon them, saith the Father, yea, even upon all the nations of the Gentiles.
>
> **21** And it shall come to pass that I will establish my people, O house of Israel.
>
> **22** And behold, this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; and it shall be a New Jerusalem. And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you.

**3 Nephi 21**

> **20** For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel;
>
> **21** And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.
>
> **22** But if they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance;
>
> **23** And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.
>
> **24** And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem.
>
> **25** And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst.
>
> **26** And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, yea, even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem.
>
> **27** Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, with the Father to prepare the way whereby they may come unto me, that they may call on the Father in my name.
>
> **28** Yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father among all nations in preparing the way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance.
>
> **29** And they shall go out from all nations; and they shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight, for I will go before them, saith the Father, and I will be their rearward.

Verse 26 brings in the Lost Tribes of Israel.

**(D-6) The Return of the Ten Tribes**

> **Elder Wilford Woodruff** taught that when the ten tribes returned, they would come to Ephraim to obtain the priesthood as well as their endowments and sealings (see *Journal of Discourses,* 4:231–32; 18:127). **Elder Orson Pratt** stated: "God is determined to raise up Prophets among that people, but he will not bestow upon them all the fulness of the blessings of the Priesthood. The fulness will be reserved to be given to them after they come to Zion." (In *Journal of Discourses,* 18:25.)
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 115)

**(D-7) The Lost Tribes to Come to Zion**

> The ten tribes will remain in the land of Zion among the tribe of Ephraim for some time. **Elder Orson Pratt** explained: "How long will they who come from the north countries tarry in the heights of Zion? Sometime. They have got to raise wheat, cultivate the grape, wine and oil, raise flocks and herds, and their souls will have to become as a watered garden. They will dwell in Zion a good while, and during that time, there will be twelve thousand chosen out of each of these ten tribes, besides twelve thousand that will be chosen from Judah, Joseph, and the remaining tribes, one hundred and forty-four thousand in all [see Revelation 7:4–8; D&C 77:11]. Chosen for what? To be sealed in their foreheads. For what purpose? So that the power of death and pestilence and plague that will go forth in those days sweeping over the nations of the earth will have no power over them. These parties who are sealed in their foreheads will go forth among all people, nations and tongues, and gather up and hunt out the house of Israel, wherever they are scattered, and bring as many as they possibly can into the Church of the first-born, preparatory to the great day of the coming of the Lord.

One hundred and forty-four thousand missionaries! Quite a host. All this has got to take place." (In *Journal of Discourses,* 18:25.)

The ten tribes, however, are to eventually receive their land inheritance with Judah and not with Ephraim (see Ether 13:11), and there will come a time after they have received their priesthood blessings when they will go to Jerusalem. In that day will be fulfilled the statement of Jeremiah: "In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers" (Jeremiah 3:18).

**Elder Orson Pratt** stated further: "By and by, when all things are prepared—when the Jews have received their scourging, and Jesus has descended upon the Mount of Olives, the ten tribes will leave Zion, and will go to Palestine, to inherit the land that was given to their ancient fathers, and it will be divided amongst the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. They will go there to dwell in peace in their own land from that time, until the earth shall pass away. But Zion, after their departure, will still remain upon the western hemisphere, and she will be crowned with glory as well as old Jerusalem, and, as the Psalmist David says, she will become the joy of the whole earth. 'Beautiful for situation is Mount Zion on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.'" (In *Journal of Discourses,* 18:68.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),

p. 116)

**Back to Isaiah 14 (2 Nephi 24)**

**4** And it shall come to pass in that day, that thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say: How hath the oppressor ceased, the golden city ceased!

**5** The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, the scepters of the rulers.

**6** He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hindereth.

**7** The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet; they break forth into singing.

**8** Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, and also the cedars of Lebanon, saying: Since thou art laid down no feller is come up against us.

**9** Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.

**10** All they shall speak and say unto thee: Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us?

**11** Thy pomp is brought down to the grave; the noise of thy viols is not heard; the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.

**(14-13) Isaiah 14:4–21. Isaiah Sang a Song for Babylon**

This satirical or taunting song, given in Isaiah's own beautiful poetry, is a song of judgment against the Babylon of unrighteousness. Isaiah strides through the future in this powerful Hebrew meter, leaving Babylon trodden down and vanquished in the triumph of Israel.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 153)

In case the taunting is confusing and you don't understand what Isaiah is saying here: Isaiah figuratively asks Zion's oppressors, "why did you stop?" He then goes on to explain to them why they stopped by saying "the Lord broke you and your power. And now the Lord is beating you down." He then continues his mocking by saying that the whole earth is better off because of this exchange and they are partying in celebration. He finishes this taunt by telling Babylon/the Assyrian to not worry because "hell is full of people/countries like you" and you'll be having a party with them in hell saying to each other "wow, you got destroyed too?"

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

**65** And with one heart and with one mind, gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you.

**66** And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God;

**67** And the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion.

**68** And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety.

**69** And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another.

**70** And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore we cannot stand.

**71** And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy.

**Back to Isaiah 14 (2 Nephi 24)**

**12** How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! Art thou cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations!

**13** For thou hast said in thy heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north;

**14** I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.

**15** Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

**2 Nephi 24:12–17. Lucifer**

The only places in the Bible and the Book of Mormon where the title *Lucifer* is used are Isaiah 14:12 and 2 Nephi 24:12. In Doctrine and Covenants 76:25–28 we learn that Lucifer (which means "lightbearer") was the premortal name of Satan. Because of his rebellion against God he fell from his position of "authority in the presence of God" (v. 25) and "was called Perdition" (v. 26), which means "destruction."

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (1996), PDF Version, p. 37)

**(14-14) Isaiah 14:12–15. Who Was "Lucifer, Son of the Morning"?**

Isaiah again used dualism. Chapters 13 and 14 describe the downfall of Babylon, both of Babylon as an empire and of Babylon as the symbol of the world (see D&C 133:14). Thus, most scholars think "Lucifer, son of the morning" is the king of Babylon, probably Nebuchadnezzar. In the symbolic use of *Babylon,* (Babylon as spiritual wickedness and the kingdom of Satan), Lucifer is Satan. This interpretation is confirmed in latter-day revelation (see D&C 76:26–8). Satan and Babylon's prince (both represented by Lucifer in this passage) aspire to take kingly glory to themselves, but in fact will be thrust into hell where there will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Compare Isaiah 14:13–14 with Moses 4:1–4, where Lucifer's conditions for saving all men are given. What adds to the power of the imagery is the fact that the word congregation (v. 13) is translated by Keil and Delitzsch as the "assembly of gods" (*Commentary,* 7:1:312).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed., 2003), p. 155)

These verses are undeniable proofs that Isaiah wrote poetically so that multiple prophecies could be discussed in a single utterance, this is known as dualism. It's why the Lord taught in parables and why a large part of the world passes on wisdom from generation to generation using mythology. For example, the boy who cried wolf. We might not have

wolf problems today and the boy even goes unnamed, yet the story of the boy who cried wolf can repeat over and over again. The world likes to think of things as linear but the gospel and the Lord is cyclical in nature. Here, Isaiah flat out gives us the dualism—pride causes nations/people to reach for things and heights that are ungodly and things they are not worthy of. Because of that, they fall. This theme is commonly summarized as "pride precedes the fall" or "the pride cycle."

Isaiah here says flatly that the reasons why Babylon fell are the same reasons why Lucifer fell. This gives us more tools to help identify the modern Assyrian. For how did Satan fall from grace?

**Genesis 3**

> **2** And he came before me, saying, Behold I; send me. I will be thy Son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost; and surely I will do it. Wherefore, give me thine honor.

In Isaiah chapter ten, we learn that "the Assyrians" will be/are an unelected group of people ("aren't we like kings?") We also understand that the Assyrian/scourge rises with the sickness that sweeps the land (Doctrine and Covenants 45:31).

Combining the two, we have an unelected group of people taking control during the desolating sickness with the mantra "not a single person lost!" Did we see that?

Another thing that we learn from the Old Testament Student Manual is that Babylon refers to the world generally, but it also refers in some cases to a specific city ("empire and symbol of the world").

**Revelation 18**

> **10** Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, ***that great city Babylon, that mighty city!*** for in one hour is thy judgment come.

**Back to Isaiah 14 (2 Nephi 24)**

**16** They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and shall consider thee, and shall say: Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?

**17** And made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof, and opened not the house of his prisoners?

**18** All the kings of the nations, yea, all of them, lie in glory, every one of them in his own house.

**19** But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and the remnant of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcass trodden under feet.

**20** Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land and slain thy people; the seed of evil-doers shall never be renowned.

Isaiah first identifies the fall of Babylon and the Assyrian, then proceeds to taunt and mock them. Then he compares their fall to that of Satan. In these verses he then taunts Satan, but in taunting Satan he points out the differences between Babylon/Assyrian and Lucifer, going so far as to say it will be worse off for Satan compared to the other two. He first says that the people will "narrowly look upon thee"—they will have to squint to see him because he is so small and insignificant. Isaiah then says that people will then mock Satan directly to his face "is this the man?" ("I thought you'd be taller?") He then says that all the other kingdoms will lie down in some form of glory which we learned about in verses 9–11 (e.g., they will be greeted by others in hell but will eventually receive a kingdom of glory in the Telestial Kingdom) but for Satan there is none of that, he will be utterly alone, eventually cast to outer darkness. This has multiple fulfillments, for when the Lord comes on the Great and Dreadful Day, Satan will no longer have power over the hearts of men, and all those he did have power over will go to the grave, where he cannot go. A second fulfillment is at the end of the Millennium, when Satan will be cast into outer darkness which has no glory (even the wickedest of kingdoms and people will obtain the telestial kingdom, which is a kingdom of glory).

**Back to Isaiah 14 (2 Nephi 24)**

**21** Prepare slaughter for his children for the iniquities of their fathers, that they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities.

**22** For I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of Hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the Lord.

**23** I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water; and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of Hosts.

**24** The Lord of Hosts hath sworn, saying: Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand—

**25** That I will bring the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot; then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders.

Once again, the Lord says that He is what is bringing the enemy up to the neck of New Jerusalem. When the Lord goes on the offense he will tread the enemy "under foot" and the yoke will be taken off (Doctrine and Covenants 113).

**Back to Isaiah 14 (2 Nephi 24)**

**26** This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all nations.

The Lord here explains the transfer at this time from the Assyrian and America to Babylon and the world when he says what I have done to the Assyrian and the cleansing of America is the purpose for the world (i.e., What I did to the Assyrian, I will do to all of you). Then he says that this is the hand that is stretched out upon all nations (i.e., this is the choice that is presented to all of you). This is what I commonly simply refer to as "the ultimatum" (1 Nephi 14:7).

**Back to Isaiah 14 (2 Nephi 24)**

**27** For the Lord of Hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul? And his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?

The Lord says here first "[I have] purposed, and who shall disannul" or in other words I have resolved, I have deliberated, and who shall break it up? What is the Lord referring to here? He is referring to his marriage to the Church of the Firstborn and the Kingdom of God and is saying "for I have married, who hath power to divorce me?" Then he says that his hand is stretched out "and who shall turn it back?" or in other words "I am going on the offense, who can stop me?"

This is, yet another, awesome tie into:

**Doctrine and Covenants 121**

> **33** How long can rolling waters remain impure? What power shall stay the heavens? As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course, or to turn it up stream, as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints.
>
> **34** Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?
>
> **35** Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson

**Back to Isaiah 14 (2 Nephi 24)**

**28** In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden.

**29** Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, because the rod of him that smote thee is broken; for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent.

**30** And the firstborn of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety; and I will kill thy root with famine, and he shall slay thy remnant.

**31** Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou, whole Palestina, art dissolved; for there shall come from the north a smoke, and none shall be alone in his appointed times.

**32** What shall then answer the messengers of the nations? That the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it.

Isaiah here says that just because the Assyrian fell, the Assyrian's enemies shouldn't rejoice because from this shall spawn a much worse scourge. The Lord says he will be holding back that new scourge ***with the famine.*** The message for the world is salvation has come in Zion. With dualism what do we know will happen? The Lord says just because the Assyrian, Gadianton robbers etc. have been dealt a blow in America, the world, and more specifically Old Jerusalem, should not rejoice, because a much worse scourge is coming for them "from the north." We will learn more about this scourge from the north headed for Jerusalem in Revelation.

**Doctrine and Covenants 58**

**5** Remember this, which I tell you before, that you may lay it to heart, and receive that which is to follow.

**6** Behold, verily I say unto you, for this cause I have sent you—that you might be obedient, and that your hearts might be prepared to bear testimony of the things which are to come;

**7** And also that you might be honored in laying the foundation, and in bearing record of the land upon which the Zion of God shall stand;

**8** And also that a feast of fat things might be prepared for the poor; yea, a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined, that the earth may know that the mouths of the prophets shall not fail;

**9** Yea, a supper of the house of the Lord, well prepared, unto which all nations shall be invited.

**10** First, the rich and the learned, the wise and the noble;

**11** And after that cometh the day of my power; then shall the poor, the lame, and the blind, and the deaf, come in unto the marriage of the Lamb, and partake of the supper of the Lord, prepared for the great day to come.

**12** Behold, I, the Lord, have spoken it.

**13** And that the testimony might go forth from Zion, yea, from the mouth of the city of the heritage of God

What shall then answer the messengers of the nations? What is the testimony going forth from Zion? That the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it. After the day of the Lord's power, then shall the poor, the lame, and the blind, and the deaf, come in unto the marriage of the Lamb.

# Isaiah 48–49, 1 Nephi 20–21

## Isaiah Chapter 48 (1 Nephi 20)

**Isaiah 48 (1 Nephi 20)**

*The Lord reveals His purposes to Israel—Israel has been chosen in the furnace of affliction and is to go forth from Babylon.*

**1** Hearken and hear this, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, or out of the waters of baptism, who swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, yet they swear not in truth nor in righteousness.

**2** Nevertheless, they call themselves of the holy city, but they do not stay themselves upon the God of Israel, who is the Lord of Hosts; yea, the Lord of Hosts is his name.

**(17-3) Isaiah 48:1–8. Judah's Apostasy**

Isaiah 48:1–2 describes Israel's apostasy from God's revealed ways. While these chosen people of the Lord have "come forth out of the waters of … baptism" (1 Nephi 20:1; compare Isaiah 48:1–2with 1 Nephi 20:1–2), "they do not stay themselves upon the … Lord" (1 Nephi 20:2). In other words, they have apostatized.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 191)

**1 Nephi 20:1–2. "They Call Themselves of the Holy City"**

In 1 Nephi 20:1–2, the prophet Isaiah chastised the house of Israel for claiming to follow the Lord without keeping His commandments. They felt that because they were His covenant people and lived in the holy city of Jerusalem, God would always protect them. Isaiah taught that it is not where you live but how you live that is important (see verses 18–22).

(*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

With dualism in mind, those that have been baptized and "who swear by the name of the Lord" (temple) are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In verse 2 it says "they that call themselves of the holy city." This should sound familiar as the Lord warned "upon my house shall it begin, and from my house shall it go forth, saith the Lord; first among those among you, saith the Lord, who have professed to know my name and have not known me, and have blasphemed against me in the midst of my house, saith the Lord." (D&C 112:25–26) The richest blessings will be bestowed on those who accept the gospel and live its principles in this life; the most severe punishments will come down on the hypocrites in the church.

The question(s) that should follow such a discovery should be along the lines of "what causes the people of the Lord to call themselves of the Holy City, but actually be apostate?"

The answers are provided replete in the scriptures.

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**47** And while they were yet laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves: And what need hath my lord of this tower?

**48** And consulted for a long time, saying among themselves: What need hath my lord of this tower, seeing this is a time of peace?

**49** ***Might not this money be given to the exchangers?*** For there is no need of these things.

**50** And while they were at variance one with another they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord.

**2 Nephi 26**

**10** And when these things have passed away a speedy destruction cometh unto my people; for, notwithstanding the pains of my soul, I have seen it; wherefore, I know that it shall come to pass; and ***they sell themselves for naught;*** for, for the reward of their pride and their foolishness they shall reap destruction; for because they yield unto the devil and choose works of darkness rather than light, therefore they must go down to hell.

**11** For the Spirit of the Lord will not always strive with man. And when the Spirit ceaseth to strive with man then cometh speedy destruction, and this grieveth my soul.

**14** ***But behold, I prophesy unto you concerning the last days; concerning the days when the Lord God shall bring these things forth unto the children of men.***

**20** And the Gentiles are lifted up in the pride of their eyes, and have stumbled, because of the greatness of their stumbling block, that they have built up many churches; nevertheless, they put down the power and miracles of God, ***and preach up unto themselves their own wisdom and their own learning, that they may get gain and grind upon the face of the poor.***

**21** And there are many churches built up which cause envyings, and strifes, and malice.

**22** And there are also secret combinations, even as in times of old, according to the combinations of the devil, for he is the founder of all these things; yea, the founder of murder, and works of darkness; ***yea, and he leadeth them by the neck with a flaxen cord, until he bindeth them with his strong cords forever.***

**25** Behold, doth [the Lord] cry unto any, saying: Depart from me? Behold, I say unto you, Nay; but he saith: Come unto me all ye ends of the earth, ***buy milk and honey, without money and without price.***

**26** Behold, hath he commanded any that they should depart out of the synagogues, or out of the houses of worship? Behold, I say unto you, Nay.

**27** Hath he commanded any that they should not partake of his salvation? Behold I say unto you, Nay; ***but he hath given it free for all men; and he hath commanded his people that they should persuade all men to repentance.***

**28** Behold, hath the Lord commanded any that they should not partake of his goodness? Behold I say unto you, Nay; but ***all men are privileged the one like unto the other, and none are forbidden.***

**29** ***He commandeth that there shall be no priestcrafts; for, behold, priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion.***

**30** ***Behold, the Lord hath forbidden this thing; wherefore, the Lord God hath given a commandment that all men should have charity, which charity is love. And except they should have charity they were nothing. Wherefore, if they should have charity they would not suffer the laborer in Zion to perish.***

**31** ***But the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish.***

**Helaman 13**

**12** Yea, wo unto ***this great city of Zarahemla;*** for behold, it is because of those who are righteous that it is saved; yea, wo unto ***this great city,*** for I perceive, saith the Lord, that there are many, yea, even the more part of this great city, that will harden their hearts against me, saith the Lord.

**13** But blessed are they who will repent, for them will I spare. But behold, if it were not for the righteous who are in ***this great city,*** behold, I would cause that fire should come down out of heaven and destroy it.

**14** But behold, it is for the righteous' sake that it is spared. But behold, the time cometh, saith the Lord, that when ye shall cast out the righteous from among you, then shall ye be ripe for destruction; yea, wo be unto ***this great city,*** because of the wickedness and abominations which are in her.

**17** And behold, a curse shall come upon the land, saith the Lord of Hosts, because of the people's sake who are upon the land, yea, because of their wickedness and their abominations.

**18** And it shall come to pass, saith the Lord of Hosts, yea, our great and true God, that ***whoso shall hide up treasures*** in the earth shall find them again no more, because of the great curse of the land, save he be ***a righteous man and shall hide it up unto the Lord.***

**19** For I will, saith the Lord, ***that they shall hide up their treasures unto me; and cursed be they who hide not up their treasures unto me; for none hideth up their treasures unto me save it be the righteous; and he that hideth not up his treasures unto me, cursed is he, and also the treasure, and none shall redeem it because of the curse of the land.***

**20** ***And the day shall come that they shall hide up their treasures, because they have set their hearts upon riches; and because they have set their hearts upon their riches, and will hide up their treasures when they shall flee before their enemies; because they will not hide them up unto me, cursed be they and also their treasures; and in that day shall they be smitten, saith the Lord.***

**21** Behold ye, ***the people of this great city,*** and hearken unto my words; yea, hearken unto the words which the Lord saith; for behold, he saith that ***ye are cursed because of your riches, and also are your riches cursed because ye have set your hearts upon them, and have not hearkened unto the words of him who gave them unto you.***

**22** ***Ye do not remember the Lord your God in the things with which he hath blessed you, but ye do always remember your riches, not to thank the Lord your God for them; yea, your hearts are not drawn out unto the Lord, but they do swell with great pride, unto boasting, and unto great swelling, envyings, strifes, malice, persecutions, and murders, and all manner of iniquities.***

**23** ***For this cause hath the Lord God caused that a curse should come upon the land, and also upon your riches, and this because of your iniquities.***

**24** Yea, wo unto this people, because of this time which has arrived, that ye do cast out the prophets, and do mock them, and cast stones at them, and do slay them, and do all manner of iniquity unto them, even as they did of old time.

**25** And now when ye talk, ye say: If our days had been in the days of our fathers of old, we would not have slain the prophets; we would not have stoned them, and cast them out.

**26** ***Behold ye are worse than they; for as the Lord liveth, if a prophet come among you and declareth unto you the word of the Lord, which testifieth of your sins and iniquities, ye are angry with him, and cast him out and seek all manner of ways to destroy him; yea, you will say that he is a false prophet, and that he is a sinner, and of the devil, because he testifieth that your deeds are evil.***

**27** ***But behold, if a man shall come among you and shall say: Do this, and there is no iniquity; do that and ye shall not suffer; yea, he will say: Walk after the pride of your own hearts; yea, walk after the pride of your eyes, and do whatsoever your heart desireth—and if a man shall come among you and say this, ye will receive him, and say that he is a prophet.***

**28** ***Yea, ye will lift him up, and ye will give unto him of your substance; ye will give unto him of your gold, and of your silver, and ye will clothe him with costly apparel; and because he speaketh flattering words unto you, and he saith that all is well, then ye will not find fault with him.***

**29** O ye wicked and ye perverse generation; ye hardened and ye stiffnecked people, how long will ye suppose that the Lord will suffer you? ***Yea, how long will ye suffer yourselves to be led by foolish and blind guides? Yea, how long will ye choose darkness rather than light?***

**30** Yea, behold, the anger of the Lord is already kindled against you; behold, he hath cursed the land because of your iniquity.

**31** ***And behold, the time cometh that he curseth your riches, that they become slippery, that ye cannot hold them; and in the days of your poverty ye cannot retain them.***

**32** ***And in the days of your poverty ye shall cry unto the Lord; and in vain shall ye cry, for your desolation is already come upon you, and your destruction is made sure; and then shall ye weep and howl in that day, saith the Lord of Hosts.*** And then shall ye lament, and say:

**33** O that I had repented, and had not killed the prophets, and stoned them, and cast them out. Yea, in that day ye shall say: O that we had remembered the Lord our God ***in the day that he gave us our riches, and then they would not have become slippery that we should lose them; for behold, our riches are gone from us.***

**34** Behold, we lay a tool here and on the morrow it is gone; and behold, our swords are taken from us in the day we have sought them for battle.

**35** ***Yea, we have hid up our treasures and they have slipped away from us, because of the curse of the land.***

**36** O that we had repented in the day that the word of the Lord came unto us; for behold the land is cursed, and all things are become slippery, and we cannot hold them.

**37** Behold, we are surrounded by demons, yea, we are encircled about by the angels of him who hath sought to destroy our souls. Behold, our iniquities are great. O Lord, canst thou not turn away thine anger from us? And this shall be your language in those days.

**38** ***But behold, your days of probation are past; ye have procrastinated the day of your salvation until it is everlastingly too late, and your destruction is made sure; yea, for ye have sought all the days of your lives for that which ye could not obtain; and ye have sought for happiness in doing iniquity, which thing is contrary to the nature of that righteousness which is in our great and Eternal Head.***

**39** O ye people of the land, that ye would hear my words! And I pray that the anger of the Lord be turned away from you, and that ye would repent and be saved.

**John 3**

**19** And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

**20** ***For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.***

**21** ***But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 29**

**43** And thus did I, the Lord God, appoint unto man the days of his probation—that by his natural death he might be raised in immortality unto eternal life, even as many as would believe;

**44** And they that believe not unto eternal damnation; for they cannot be redeemed from their spiritual fall, because they repent not;

**45** ***For they love darkness rather than light, and their deeds are evil, and they receive their wages of whom they list to obey.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 10**

**20** Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ***Satan has great hold upon their hearts;*** he stirreth them up to iniquity against that which is good;

**21** And their hearts are corrupt, and full of wickedness and abominations; and ***they love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil; therefore they will not ask of me.***

**22** Satan stirreth them up, that he may lead their souls to destruction.

**23** And thus he has laid a cunning plan, thinking to destroy the work of God; but I will require this at their hands, and it shall turn to their shame and condemnation in the day of judgment.

**24** Yea, he stirreth up their hearts to anger against this work.

**25** ***Yea, he saith unto them: Deceive and lie in wait to catch, that ye may destroy; behold, this is no harm. And thus he flattereth them, and telleth them that it is no sin to lie that they may catch a man in a lie, that they may destroy him.***

**26** ***And thus he flattereth them, and leadeth them along until he draggeth their souls down to hell; and thus he causeth them to catch themselves in their own snare.***

**27** And thus he goeth up and down, to and fro in the earth, seeking to destroy the souls of men.

**28** Verily, verily, I say unto you, wo be unto him that lieth to deceive because he supposeth that another lieth to deceive, for such are not exempt from the justice of God.

**3 Nephi 13**

**24** ***No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.***

**25** … Remember the words which I have spoken. For behold, ye are they whom I have chosen to minister unto this people. ***Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on.*** Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

**26** Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

**27** Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

**28** And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin;

**29** And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.

**30** Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, even so will he clothe you, if ye are not of little faith.

**31** ***Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?***

**32** For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

**33** ***But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.***

Priestcraft, gain, and not listening to the prophets and men inspired from God are what are explained time and time and time again to be the issues.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

***Down with that of priestcraft,***[2] and let all the people say Amen! ***that the blood of our fathers may not cry from the ground against us.***[4]

**Footnotes**

(2) 2 Ne. 26:29 Alma 1:12, 16 D&C 33:4

(4) 3 Ne. 9:11 Morm. 8:40 D&C 136:36 Moses 5:35

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 117)

If we are still not convinced, Moroni speaks as loud and clear as word can be.

**Mormon 8**

**23** Search the prophecies of Isaiah. Behold, I cannot write them. Yea, behold I say unto you, that those saints who have gone before me, who have possessed this land, ***shall cry, yea, even from the dust will they cry unto the Lord;*** and as the Lord liveth he will remember the covenant which he hath made with them.

**26** And no one need say they shall not come, for they surely shall, for the Lord hath spoken it; ***for out of the earth shall they come,*** by the hand of the Lord, and none can stay it; and it shall come in a day when it shall be said that miracles are done away; and it shall come ***even as if one should speak from the dead.***

**27** And it shall come in a day ***when the blood of saints shall cry unto the Lord,*** because of secret combinations and the works of darkness.

**31** Yea, it shall come in a day when ***there shall be great pollutions upon the face of the earth;*** there shall be murders, and robbing, and lying, and deceivings, and whoredoms, and all manner of abominations; when there shall be many who will say, Do this, or do that, and it mattereth not, for the Lord will uphold such at the last day. But wo unto such, for they are in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity.

**32** Yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be churches built up that shall say: Come unto me, ***and for your money you shall be forgiven of your sins.***

**33** O ye wicked and perverse and stiffnecked people, why have ye built up churches unto yourselves ***to get gain? Why have ye transfigured the holy word of God, that ye might bring damnation upon your souls? Behold, look ye unto the revelations of God; for behold, the time cometh at that day when all these things must be fulfilled.***

**34** Behold, the Lord hath shown unto me great and marvelous things concerning that which must shortly come, at that day when these things shall come forth among you.

**35** ***Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing.***

**36** And I know that ye do walk in the pride of your hearts; ***and there are none save a few only who do not lift themselves up in the pride of their hearts, unto the wearing of very fine apparel, unto envying, and strifes, and malice, and persecutions, and all manner of iniquities; and your churches, yea, even every one, have become polluted because of the pride of your hearts.***

**37** For behold, ***ye do love money, and your substance, and your fine apparel, and the adorning of your churches, more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted.***

**38** ***O ye pollutions, ye hypocrites, ye teachers, who sell yourselves for that which will canker, why have ye polluted the holy church of God?*** Why are ye ashamed to take upon you the name of Christ? Why do ye not think that greater is the value of an endless happiness than that misery which never dies—because of the praise of the world?

**39** Why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not?

**40** Yea, why do ye build up your secret abominations ***to get gain,*** and cause that widows should mourn before the Lord, and also orphans to mourn before the Lord, ***and also the blood of their fathers and their husbands to cry unto the Lord from the ground, for vengeance upon your heads?***

**41** Behold, the sword of vengeance hangeth over you; ***and the time soon cometh that he avengeth the blood of the saints upon you, for he will not suffer their cries any longer.***

**3 Nephi 24**

**8** Will a man rob God? ***Yet ye have robbed me.*** But ye say: Wherein have we robbed thee? …

**9** Ye are cursed with a curse, ***for ye have robbed me***…

**Back to Isaiah 48 (1 Nephi 20)**

**3** Behold, I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I showed them. I did show them suddenly.

**4** And I did it because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;

**5** And I have even from the beginning declared to thee; before it came to pass I showed them thee; and I showed them for fear lest thou shouldst say—Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image hath commanded them.

**6** Thou hast seen and heard all this; and will ye not declare them? And that I have showed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.

**7** They are created now, and not from the beginning, even before the day when thou heardest them not they were declared unto thee, lest thou shouldst say—Behold I knew them.

**8** Yea, and thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time thine ear was not opened; for I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb.

**(17-3) Isaiah 48:1–8. Judah's Apostasy**

For this reason, the Lord elected to demonstrate His powers of omniscience. He had, He told them, "declared … things from the beginning," that is, He spoke of them before their occurrence, and then "shewed them … suddenly" by bringing them to pass (Isaiah 48:3). This He had done, He said, lest the apostates should say, "Mine idol hath done them" (v. 5), or "Behold, I knew them" (v. 7), that is to say, "I already knew that." The Lord then promised to defer His anger but utterly refused to give His glory to false gods or to suffer His name to be polluted (compare v. 11 with 1 Nephi 20:11). Thus the Lord's purpose for revealing the future unto man is partly made clear: it is the solid proof that He is truly God, for no mute idol could possibly duplicate such a feat.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 191)

I go over this specifically and in great detail in the "Understanding Prophecy" chapter. It is crucial to understand why the Lord gives prophecy, for without this understanding, one cannot possess the "Spirit of Prophecy." The Lord foretells of future events that are completely unknown to the world or to the specific group of people and then brings that event into being in the clear view of the world or the specific group in question. If you understand this, then the many false ideas/doctrine/etc. being espoused by the weak in faith will melt away; the Lord will not work these miracles in secret.

If one does have that belief, that the Lord foretells of events and then fulfills them behind closed doors (i.e., "the Lord works in dark chambers"), you "shorten the arm of the Lord.

Nephi, directly after putting in Isaiah 48–49 into his plates, gives his commentary on them and clearly teaches the following:

**1 Nephi 22**

**6** … behold these things of which are spoken ***are temporal;*** for thus are the covenants of the Lord with our fathers; and it meaneth us in the days to come, and also all our brethren who are of the house of Israel.

**10** ***And I would, my brethren, that ye should know that all the kindreds of the earth cannot be blessed unless he shall make bare his arm in the eyes of the nations.***

**11** Wherefore, ***the Lord God will proceed to make bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations,*** in bringing about his covenants and his gospel unto those who are of the house of Israel.

**12** Wherefore, he will bring them again out of captivity, and they shall be gathered together to the lands of their inheritance; and they shall be brought out of obscurity and out of darkness; ***and they shall know*** that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer, the Mighty One of Israel.

The Lord has foretold of some pretty miraculous events yet to occur, so miraculous in fact that many, even in the church, have begun to search for figurative interpretations of them. But Nephi says, and I add my witness as well, that the Lord ***must*** make bare his arm ***in the eyes of all nations,*** and it will be so miraculous that "kings shall shut their mouths; for that which had not been told them ***shall they see"*** (3 Nephi 21:8). Members have been told of these prophecies so that when these events transpire and everyone sees them they can step forward and tell those people "who have not been told" what is going on. And then "that which they had not heard (until you tell them about it) shall they consider" (3 Nephi 21:8). The Lord here in Isaiah is chastening his people "Thou hast … heard all this; ***and will ye not declare them?"*** Many in the church have heard the prophecies, and yes, they will not only not declare them, they rationalize them away.

**Back to Isaiah 48 (1 Nephi 20)**

**9** Nevertheless, for my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain from thee, that I cut thee not off.

**10** For, behold, I have refined thee, I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

**11** For mine own sake, yea, for mine own sake will I do this, for I will not suffer my name to be polluted, and I will not give my glory unto another.

John the Revelator in Revelation 7 saw an innumerable host of people with the 144,000 and an angel explained unto John that these "are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." We have talked in previous Isaiah chapters about the Lord refining and purifying in great detail.

**Doctrine and Covenants 93**

**36** The glory of God is intelligence, or in other words, light and truth.

"I will not give ***my glory*** unto another [group of people]" says the Lord in Isaiah, but who to give "glory" to when a generation of the Lord's people have forsaken the Lord for filthy lucre?

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**55** And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, ***my young men, and they that are of middle age also*** among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house…

**Doctrine and Covenants 128**

**18** … those things which never have been revealed from the foundation of the world, ***but have been kept hid from the wise and prudent,*** shall be revealed ***unto babes and sucklings*** in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times.

**2 Nephi 27**

**24** And again it shall come to pass that the Lord shall say unto him that shall read the words that shall be delivered him:

**25** Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, ***but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men***—

**26** Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, ***for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.***

**33** Therefore, thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.

**34** ***But when he seeth his children, the work of my hands,*** in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.

**Doctrine and Covenants 35**

**10** And the time speedily cometh that great things are to be shown forth unto the children of men;

**11** But without faith shall not anything be shown forth except desolations upon Babylon, the same which has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

**12** And there are none that doeth good except those who are ready to receive the fulness of my gospel, which I have sent forth unto this generation.

**13** ***Wherefore, I call upon the weak things of the world, those who are unlearned and despised, to thresh the nations by the power of my Spirit [i.e. "glory"];***

**14** ***And their arm shall be my arm, and I will be their shield and their buckler; and I will gird up their loins, and they shall fight manfully for me; and their enemies shall be under their feet; and I will let fall the sword in their behalf, and by the fire of mine indignation will I preserve them.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 133**

**57** And for this cause, that men might be made partakers of the glories which were to be revealed, the Lord sent forth the fulness of his gospel, his everlasting covenant, ***reasoning in plainness and simplicity***—

**58** ***To prepare the weak for those things which are coming on the earth, and for the Lord's errand in the day when the weak shall confound the wise, and the little one become a strong nation, and two shall put their tens of thousands to flight.***

**59** ***And by the weak things of the earth the Lord shall thresh the nations by the power of his Spirit.***

**Isaiah 10 / 2 Nephi 20**

**26** And the Lord of Hosts shall stir up a scourge for him ***according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb;*** and as his rod was upon the sea so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.

We've already gone over this being Gideon and his men, but now lets tie this together with the Lord not "giving his Glory to another."

**Judges 7**

**2** And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, ***lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.***

**Isaiah 2 / 2 Nephi 12**

**11** The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, ***and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.***

**Back to Isaiah 48 (1 Nephi 20)**

**12** Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel my called, for I am he; I am the first, and I am also the last.

**13** Mine hand hath also laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens. I call unto them and they stand up together.

**14** All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; who among them hath declared these things unto them? The Lord hath loved him; yea, and he will fulfil his word which he hath declared by them; and he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall come upon the Chaldeans.

The Lord first tells those who "are called" to hearken and the first thing he tells them to do is to assemble together and hear.

**Doctrine and Covenants 121**

**34** ***Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?***

**35** ***Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world,*** and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson—

**3 Nephi 24**

**16** ***Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another,*** and the Lord hearkened and heard; and a book of remembrance was written before him ***for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.***

Every single member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is "called," yet the Lord says "few ***are chosen,"*** and why? They don't learn this one lesson… The one lesson?

**Doctrine and Covenants 121**

**36** That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled ***only upon the principles of righteousness.***

That priestcraft, or "preaching for gain," or using authority/priesthood/etc. for gain (i.e., "principles of unrighteousness") is because "their hearts are set so much upon the things of the world." Here we learn that those not engaged in priestcraft but who fear the Lord according the Lord's precepts begin to meet often one with the other. This is clearly not talking about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints globally and entirely for "the called" meet together weekly, and have been doing so for almost two hundred years… No, these are "the chosen," at this specific time, just then beginning to meet and talk often. The Lord has called, and His chosen have stood up—they have answered the call and have begun to meet together often.

**President Nelson** said in 2020:

We live in the day that "our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation." We have front-row seats to witness live what the prophet Nephi saw only in vision, that "the power of the Lamb of God" ***would descend*** "upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.

("Hear Him," General Conference, April 2020)

**President Nelson** in 2021 said:

"I know for sure that the Lord directs the affairs of His Church. He said, "I will show [you] that I am able to do mine own work." (2 Nephi 27:21.)

("Welcome Message," General Conference, April 2021)

**President Nelson** in 2023:

I know that His power ***is descending*** upon His covenant-keeping people, who are "armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.

("The Answer Is Always Jesus Christ," General Conference, April 2023)

The Lord then asks this group, this group which has now begun to meet together often, who are receiving the power of the Lamb as it is descending, etc., "who ***among them*** hath declared these things ***unto them?"*** The Lord asks and wants to know who has been teaching "these things"? So what are "these things"?

**Matthew 24**

> **45** ***Who then is a faithful and wise servant,*** whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, ***to give them meat in due season?***
>
> **46** ***Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.***

When the Lord asks "who has been teaching these things?" the "meat" pertaining to the "season," what will be our answer I wonder?

In the Book of Mormon Student Manual, in the introduction to this chapter, it says:

**1 Nephi 20–21. Introduction to the Writings of Isaiah**

> Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles encouraged Latter-day Saints ***to devote themselves to serious study of Isaiah:*** "Read, ponder, and pray—verse by verse, thought by thought, passage by passage, chapter by chapter! As Isaiah himself asks: 'Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine?' His answer: 'them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.' (Isa. 28:9–10.)" ("Ten Keys to Understanding Isaiah," Ensign, Oct. 1973, 83).
>
> (*Book of Mormon Student Manual* (2009))

The Lord then continues in Matthew and in 3 Nephi 24:

**Matthew 24**

> **47** Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

**3 Nephi 24**

> **17** And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.
>
> **18** Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

In Isaiah, the Lord says that He *"loves him,"* then finishes the verse by saying all of the Lord's words *will be fulfilled.* The Lord loves those watchman who teach these things literally, preaching they will be fulfilled. At the end of 3 Nephi 24, we finally have the entrance of Joseph Smith Jr. returning and discerning.

**Doctrine and Covenants 105**

> **35** There has been ***a day of calling,*** but the time has come for ***a day of choosing;*** and let those be chosen that are worthy.
>
> **36** And it shall be manifest unto ***my servant,*** by the voice of the Spirit, those that are chosen; and they shall be sanctified;
>
> **37** And inasmuch as they follow the counsel which they receive, they shall have power after many days to accomplish all things pertaining to Zion.

**Back to Isaiah 48 (1 Nephi 20)**

> **15** Also, saith the Lord; I the Lord, yea, I have spoken; yea, I have called him to declare, I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.
>
> **16** Come ye near unto me; I have not spoken in secret; from the beginning, from the time that it was declared have I spoken; and the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me.
>
> **17** And thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I have sent him, the Lord thy God who teacheth thee to profit, who leadeth thee by the way thou shouldst go, hath done it.

The focus changes from those in the church generally who are teaching people the "meat in due season" (i.e. "the chosen") to a specific servant that will arise at this time. If you go down to the footnotes in verse 15 ("him") it takes you to Isaiah 45:1–4. In these verses we learn of the Lord's "anointed," the "right hand of the Lord" who will "subdue nations before the Lord" (an Elias for the Lord much like John the Baptist was) who the Lord will "loose the loins of kings" (also known as pooping in your britches or taking the strength out of the kings or as it says in 3 Nephi—"kings shall shut their mouths"). He then goes on in verses 3–4 to say that "I the Lord have called thee by name" and then says "I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee." The footnotes for these verses take you to Joseph Smith History verses 17, 33, 49. These are multiple references to Joseph Smith being "called by name." But what about Joseph's actual name being important? In 2 Nephi 3:4–15 this same prophet is discussed and in verse 15 Joseph who was sold into Egypt (who was writing this prophesy) said "and his name [the prophet we are discussing] shall be called after me; and it shall be after the name of his father." So who is this person being discussed from verses 15–17 in Isaiah 48—it is clearly Joseph Smith. We have already discussed in previous chapters Joseph Smith will return. These verses from 15–17 mirror what the Lord himself said about this servant in 3 Nephi 21:8–12.

**Back to Isaiah 48 (1 Nephi 20)**

> **18** O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments—then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.
>
> **19** Thy seed also had been as the sand; the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me.

This is reminiscent of the Lord's "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matthew 23:37.)

**Back to Isaiah 48 (1 Nephi 20)**

> **20** Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter to the end of the earth; say ye: The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob.
>
> **21** And they thirsted not; he led them through the deserts; he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them; he clave the rock also and the waters gushed out.
>
> **22** And notwithstanding he hath done all this, and greater also, there is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked.

The final command here is for people to go out and declare what has happened, including the redemption of Zion via his servant, Joseph Smith, with the "young and middle aged." From this point forward, the wicked will find no peace. Once again, these verses are echoed by the Lord in 3 Nephi 21:8–12, but here they are in a past tense form, so he is telling those of that day to go out and testify of those things which have just taken place at that time. But the Lord gives a little more insight in 3 Nephi when he says "there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them." Meaning, even with all of these miracles and people seeing them, the wicked will still be wicked and thus the Lord ends this chapter with "you, the wicked, shall not find peace" knowing that they still won't repent.

**2 Nephi 28**

> **32** Wo be unto the Gentiles, saith the Lord God of Hosts! ***For notwithstanding I shall lengthen out mine arm unto them from day to day, they will deny me;*** nevertheless, I will be merciful unto them, saith the Lord God, if they will repent and come unto me; ***for mine arm is lengthened out all the day long,*** saith the Lord God of Hosts.

## Isaiah Chapter 49 (1 Nephi 21)

**(17-4) Isaiah 49. Israel Scattered on the Isles of the Sea**

Monte S. Nyman observed that "chapter 49 is one of the most important chapters in the whole book of Isaiah, because it also clearly foretells the mission of the Latter-day Saints and the destiny of the land of America in connection with the house of Israel... Chapter 49 is of such importance that it ought to be studied diligently by every member of the Church." (*"Great Are the Words of Isaiah,"* pp. 173–74.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),

p. 191)

**Articles of Faith**

**10** We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) ***will be built*** [future tense] upon ***the American continent;*** that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.

**Isaiah 49 (1 Nephi 21)**

*The Messiah will be a light to the Gentiles and will free the prisoners—Israel will be gathered with power in the last days—Kings will be their nursing fathers.*

**1** And again: Hearken, O ye house of Israel, all ye that are broken off and are driven out because of the wickedness of the pastors of my people; yea, all ye that are broken off, that are scattered abroad, who are of my people, O house of Israel. Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken ye people from far; the Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.

**2** And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;

**3** And said unto me: Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.

**(17-5) Isaiah 49:1–3. "Thou Art My Servant, O Israel, in Whom I Will Be Glorified"**

The entire chapter of Isaiah 49 is quoted in 1 Nephi 21. Half of verse one is missing from the King James text. What was lost from the Bible is the statement that the scattering of Israel ***was a direct result of the wickedness of the religious leaders.*** Those on the isles who are invited to hearken are the broken-off or scattered branches of the house of Israel. Nephi wrote that by his time "the more part of all the tribes" of Israel had been "scattered to and fro upon the isles of the sea" (1 Nephi 22:4). Moreover it is made clear that the person speaking in these verses, the "me" of Isaiah 49:1–2, was Israel herself. Her mouth was "like a sharp sword" (v. 2) because she possessed the word of God to give to the nations. In many places God's message is likened to a sword with a keen edge (see Ephesians 6:17; Revelation 1:16; 2:12; D&C 6:2; 33:1). It is double-edged because it cuts regardless of the direction it is moved.

But ancient Israel did not spread the word of God as they might have done. Commissioned by the Lord and placed under covenant to bless all nations with the gospel and its priesthood power (see Abraham 2:11), most of Israel refused even to live the teachings of the Lord. Isaiah 49:2–3 may refer, therefore, to latter-day Israel. Nyman's explanation of why this may be so is important:

"The Lord's hiding Israel in 'the shadow of his hand' is clarified in the Doctrine and Covenants, where the Lord declares that the priesthood holders of this last dispensation are 'lawful heirs, according to the flesh, and have been hid from the world with Christ in God' (D&C 86:8–9). This description of priesthood bearers as 'lawful heirs according to the flesh' is a reference to the covenant which the Lord made with Abraham that all nations of the earth would be blessed through the literal seed of his body, who would bear the ministry and the priesthood (see Abraham 2:9–11). The Doctrine and Covenants also identifies latter-day Israel as the 'seed of Abraham' (D&C 103:17). The world did not know where scattered Israel was, but the Lord knew and had concealed them in his protective hand.

"The 'polished shaft' hidden in the Lord's quiver may be a direct reference to Joseph Smith. As the 'choice seer' of the latter day, he was to be the Lord's servant in a special sense (see 2 Nephi 3:6; 3 Nephi 21:10). The Prophet Joseph's description of himself is interesting in this light:

"'I am like a huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain; and the only polishing I get is when some corner gets rubbed off by coming in contact with something else, striking with accelerated force against religious bigotry, priestcraft, lawyer-craft, doctor-craft, lying editors, suborned judges and jurors, and the authority of perjured executives, backed by mobs, blasphemers, licentious and corrupt men and women—all hell knocking off a corner here and a corner there. Thus I will become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty, who will give me dominion over all and every one of them, when their refuge of lies shall fail, and their hiding place shall be destroyed, while these smooth-polished stones with which I come in contact become marred.' (*TPJS,* p. 304.)

"The arrow shaft is polished that it might fly truer and faster, and the shaft that is polished is generally reserved for one's most important shot. The last dispensation, when all things are gathered in one, is the Lord's most important 'shot,' so he saved his 'polished shaft' for this latter-day work. Joseph was called to give this generation the word of God (see D&C 5:10), which recalls also the sharp sword analogy mentioned in verse 2." (*"Great Are the Words of Isaiah,"* pp. 176–77.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),

pp. 191–192)

The manual puts together a good chunk of what I would put together, but, in the process of doing so, it asks more questions than it provides answers. In other words, the manual puts a lot of the puzzle pieces on the table for you and then steps back, shrugs, and says "figure it out." The first thing it addresses is the fact that religious leaders (i.e., priestcrafts) were the cause or one of the main causes of Israel's problems. The Lord then identifies how he is going to solve this problem with a "me," a specific prophet. In Isaiah, it is identified that this prophet was called from the womb and his name is known. We have identified in Chapter 48 how this is a direct reference to Joseph Smith. However, this occurrence is not unique to Joseph specifically, it is unique to all prophets generally speaking.

**Jeremiah 1**

**5** Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

**Abraham 3**

**22** Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones;

**23** And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born.

There is nothing in the first verse that can positively identify Joseph Smith specifically over that of any other prophet, however that should clarify beyond any reasonable doubt that we are not talking about Israel generally here but a prophet of God specifically. The manual then points out that ancient Israel did not spread the word of God and that

because of that we can infer that this series of scriptures is not referring to anything anciently but is referring to latter-day. There is a lot one can unpack with that but let's simply say that such an observation eliminates all older prophets from the list, thus leaving only modern prophets left. However, the manual then next makes reference to the fact that Joseph Smith himself identified himself as this servant, as the "polished shaft," which we know he is, so we are back to where we should be—with an understanding that this is a prophecy regarding Joseph Smith Jr., the polished shaft.

The manual explains that this special arrow was reserved for the last and most important shot. The connection that the manual leaves open but does not answer definitively was whether or not this arrow has been shot or will yet be shot. Joseph Smith made it clear that he, ***in his earthly life,*** was being turned into the arrow, not that he was the arrow being shot. The purposes of this arrow have not been fulfilled, but neither has the shot been made. The Lord said "in the shadow of [my] hand [have I hid him]," reserved for when that last shot will be made. This understanding will bring the next verses in Isaiah chapter 49 into clear view.

**Back to Isaiah 49 (1 Nephi 21)**

**4** Then I said, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught and in vain; surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.

**5** And now, saith the Lord—that formed me from the womb that I should be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him—though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.

The manual for this section tries to make this as broad as possible as well as old as possible (i.e., "old Israel history lesson"). But we have already identified clearly in the first three verses that there is a difference in singular pronouns versus plural pronouns (i.e., My servant, I, myself etc. is talking about Joseph Smith Jr., not Israel generally). This is talking about one person. The manual points out that the gathering of Israel started with Joseph but that this focus should be changed from Joseph individually to that of the church generally. But the problem with that is that the rest of the context doesn't make sense with that general view. However, if you replace "the church generally" with "Joseph specifically," ***all of it*** makes perfect sense. Let's take the manual and make such replacements, and see how perfectly everything fits and makes sense:

**(17-6) Isaiah 49:4–12. Did the Lord Forget ~~Israel~~ [Joseph Smith], His Chosen ~~People~~ [Prophet]?**

> The Restoration was a long time in coming. During the years of [restoration, Joseph Smith] undoubtedly felt lonely and forsaken by the Lord. Isaiah 49:4–12 shows that loneliness. Verse 4 describes the attitude of [Joseph Smith] somewhat discouraged, yet not completely so: "I have spent my strength … in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the Lord" (Isaiah 49:4).
>
> Nephi spoke of the [Latter-day Saints] in their cast-off condition as being "a hiss and a byword and … hated among all nations" (1 Nephi 19:14). Isaiah 49:7 describes that condition: men despise and abhor the Lord's covenant people. But [the church] still has hope: "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I [Joseph Smith] be glorious in the eyes of the Lord" (v. 5). [Joseph Smith] will yet be raised and restored and stand as "a light to the Gentiles" and as a beacon of "salvation unto the end of the earth" (v. 6). "In an acceptable time" God will hear [the righteous remnant in the church's] cry and "give thee ["my servant," in 1 Nephi 21:8] for a covenant of the people" (Isaiah 49:8). That began with the call of Joseph Smith, [but will not see its completeness until after Joseph Smith returns].
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 192)

Can you not see how plainly and easily this fits into the understanding of what's being taught here? Joseph Smith spent his life being made into the polished shaft but never was fully shot. He had moments where he felt totally alone and thought God had abandoned him ("O God, where art thou? And where is the pavilion that covereth thy hiding place?" D&C 121:1) and eventually "spent his strength," or in other words was martyred. But yet he knows that he will be great yet in the hands of the Lord—"the Lord didn't spend that much time turning me into a polished arrow to not use me…"

**Doctrine and Covenants 122**

> **7** … know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good.
>
> **9** Therefore, hold on thy way, and the priesthood shall remain with thee; for their bounds are set, they cannot pass. Thy days are known, and thy years shall not be numbered less; therefore, fear not what man can do, for God shall be with you forever and ever.

**3 Nephi 21**

> **10** But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, ***although he shall be marred because of them.*** Yet I will heal him, for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.

Joseph Smith Jr., like Joseph in Egypt of old, was cast into "prison" for a time, "hidden in the shadow of the Lord's hand," etc. but in the acceptable year he will be healed, and the polished shaft will be shot, to become Pharoh, the "Sun God's" right hand.

**Back to Isaiah 49 (1 Nephi 21)**

**6** And he said: It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth.

**7** Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nations abhorreth, to servant of rulers: Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful.

Once again these scriptures are echoed by the Lord in 3 Nephi 21:8–24 with much greater clarity, in which the Lord lays out the chronology of these events. The Lord explains that the Father, for his sake, will work a great and marvelous work. This work (v. 9) will cause kings to shut their mouths (v. 8); it will have an effect on even the kings and princes of the day. And what is that work? The Lord says in verse 10 that the servant (Joseph Smith) will be "marred" (and the footnote for marred takes you to Joseph Smith's martyrdom) but also says in verse 10 that the Lord will heal or "restore" him as it was described in Isaiah. He then says in 3 Nephi that He will do this to show that His wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil. He says in Isaiah that this act will be a light thing—it should bring one comfort to understand that to the Lord, life and the power of resurrection is "a light thing."

Continuing with the chronology from the Lord, He then says that those who do not accept Joseph Smith in that day (after his resurrection, after "the shot") shall be cut off (v. 11). This ultimatum is explained to Nephi in 1 Nephi 14:7, which appears directly before Nephi's transcribing of Isaiah chapters 48 and 49 into his plates. This gives further proof that he put these two chapters in at this time because they explain or gave light to that which he had seen and what he was commanded not to

write. Once again, this "cutting off" at this time is both temporally and spiritually.

This has not happened from the restoration of the church to today, though **President Nelson** in 2020 once again warned that such a future was near at hand when he said,

> The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do (see Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7).
>
> ("The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior's Second Coming," *Ensign,* April 2020)

The Lord then goes through the Redemption of Zion (vv. 13–22), the building of New Jerusalem (vv. 23–25), and finally the first mention of the 10 tribes (v. 26).

**Back to Isaiah 49 (1 Nephi 21)**

**8** Thus saith the Lord: In an acceptable time have I heard thee, O isles of the sea, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee my servant for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;

**3 Nephi 24**

> **1** … Behold, ***I will send my messenger,*** and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, ***even the messenger of the covenant,*** whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.
>
> **18** ***Then shall ye return and discern*** between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

**Moses 7**

> **61** And the day shall come that the earth shall rest, but before that day the heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, ***but my people will I preserve;***
>
> **62** ***And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth,*** to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.

**Doctrine and Covenants 113**

> **7** Questions by Elias Higbee: What is meant by the command in Isaiah, 52d chapter, 1st verse, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion—and what people had Isaiah reference to?
>
> **8** He had reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of priesthood to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel; and to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage; also to return to that power which she had lost.
>
> **9** What are we to understand by Zion loosing herself from the bands of her neck; 2d verse?
>
> **10** We are to understand that the scattered remnants are exhorted to return to the Lord from whence they have fallen; which if they do, the promise of the Lord is that he will speak to them, or give them revelation. See the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses. The bands of her neck are the curses of God upon her, or the remnants of Israel in their scattered condition among the Gentiles.

**Back to Isaiah 49 (1 Nephi 21)**

**9** That thou mayest say to the prisoners: Go forth; to them that sit in darkness: Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places.

**10** They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor the sun smite them; for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.

**11** And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted.

**12** And then, O house of Israel, behold, these shall come from far; and lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim.

**13** Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; for the feet of those who are in the east shall be established; and break forth into singing, O mountains; for they shall be smitten no more; for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

These verses are Joseph Smith calling the 10 tribes home and their subsequent journey back. They are sitting in darkness, they will be revealed, they will come forth and feed in the ways and they will be guided. The Lord will make his mountains a way and highways shall be exalted. And people will break forth in singing etc. etc. This is all a reference to the 10 tribes returning and Israel being gathered into the New Jerusalem—all of which we have covered in great detail so I will just include a single section out of Doctrine and Covenants that has some easy to see parallels and word association.

**Doctrine and Covenants 133**

> **26** And they who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord; and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves; and they shall smite the rocks, and the ice shall flow down at their presence.
>
> **27** And an highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep.
>
> **28** Their enemies shall become a prey unto them,
>
> **29** And in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water; and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land.
>
> **30** And they shall bring forth their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim, my servants.
>
> **31** And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence.
>
> **32** And there shall they fall down and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim.
>
> **33** And they shall be filled with songs of everlasting joy.
>
> **34** Behold, this is the blessing of the everlasting God upon the tribes of Israel, and the richer blessing upon the head of Ephraim and his fellows.

The 1 Nephi 22 verses already provided in this chapter above are also a perfect tie in to these same points of reference: "Wherefore, he will bring them again out of captivity, and they shall be gathered together to the lands of their inheritance; and they shall be brought out of obscurity and out of darkness."

**(17-6) Isaiah 49:4–12. Did the Lord Forget Israel, His Chosen People?**

> Nephi interpreted the foregoing verses in 1 Nephi 22. His brothers had asked if Isaiah's words were to be interpreted spiritually or temporally, and Nephi replied that they were to be interpreted both ways (see 1 Nephi 22:1–3). He then described Israel's scattering and gathering by the

> Gentiles. First Nephi 22:8–12 gives a very clear interpretation of Isaiah 49.
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 192)

I find it interesting here that the manual goes out of its way to point out that these things have a spiritual fulfillment but that they ***also have a temporal fulfillment.*** The manual points to 1 Nephi 22 to prove this. The manual continues:

> Since then, the call has gone forth to others, "to the [spiritual] prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in [spiritual] darkness, Shew yourselves" (v. 9). They shall be fed with the fruits of the gospel—not "hunger nor thirst"—and shall be gathered into the gospel net "from far … from the north and from the west" (vv. 10, 12).

I find this fascinating because this then wipes out the entire ***temporal interpretation*** of these verses and these are ***the exact verses*** that Nephi pointed to when he said ***they are temporal*** (1 Nephi 22:6,10–12). So the manual goes out of its way to point you to Nephi who is trying to explain to his brothers that these things ***are not just spiritual but also temporal*** and then the manual proceeds to use the very same verses that Nephi used ***(and identified as temporal)… in an entirely spiritual context.*** It would be like if Nephi said, "brothers, these things are spiritual and temporal—for a man stuck in a well a ladder can be used to get him out of the hole." And then the manual says "Nephi said that these things can be interpreted spiritually ***and temporally***… the ladder is like the gospel of Jesus Christ and the first step on the ladder is faith, the second step is repentance…" and then they don't go on to mention any of the temporal aspects of it—meaning, a literal temporal ladder placed in a literal temporal well. These events, the return of the ten tribes, is a literal event yet to take place. A literal event so fantastic that it will cause people altogether to forget about Moses and the Red Sea (Jeremiah 16: 14–15). A literal event that President Nelson told us, is in our future:

**President Russell M. Nelson**

> Our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, will perform some of His mightiest works between now and when He comes again. We will see miraculous indications that God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, preside over this Church in majesty and glory.
>
> ("Revelation for the Church, Revelation for Our Lives," General Conference, April 2018)

**Back to Isaiah 49 (1 Nephi 21)**

**14** But, behold, Zion hath said: The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me—but he will show that he hath not.

**15** For can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee, O house of Israel.

**16** Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.

**Psalms 137**

> **1** By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.
>
> **2** We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.
>
> **3** For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.
>
> **4** How shall we sing the LORD's song in a strange land?
>
> **5** If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning.
>
> **6** If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.
>
> **7** Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof.
>
> **8** O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.
>
> **9** Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.

We have forgotten our sucking child—we have abandoned and neglected the real, physical, tangible Zion—but the Lord, who has graven us on His palms, will not forget—cannot forget. Oh, how we should weep at the rivers of Babylon when we remember who and what we've abandoned! The Lord has not abandoned us, and He will treat us as he treated Abraham before:

**Isaiah 51**

> **1** Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.
>
> **2** Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.
>
> **3** For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

**Brother Hyrum Andrus**

> In chapter 28 of Isaiah, as he talks about the drunkards of Ephraim, and this isn't drunkards in the sense that they get it from a bottle, it's the kind of drunkenness when it says "they are drunk, but not with strong drink. "They are drunk with the ideals and the zeal and the culture of the Gentile society, and they act on that principle and march by that drum beat. Then speaking of the judgments to come upon Ephraim in that day, in verse 5, he says this: "In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty unto the residue of his people. "Isaiah 51 is a whole chapter devoted to that righteous remnant. Note how he begins: "Hearken unto me, ye that follow after righteousness." This, then, is that righteous remnant. "Look unto the rock from whence ye were hewn, and to the hole of the pit from whence ye are digged."Go back to your roots. See where you came from. Find out who you were. Find out what the Lord wants you to do. "Look to the rock from whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit from whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham," there's an example." Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you; for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him." Now, this remnant is going to be left alone, they are going to sit in the dust. Many are going to say, "The Lord has forsaken us." What is your consolation? You go back to your roots and you look to Abraham, and you say, "I'm a descendant of Abraham, and the Lord is going to handle me like he did him…"
>
> (Book of Mormon Lecture 14, "Nephi—The Key to Isaiah, Part 2")

**Back to Isaiah 49 (1 Nephi 21)**

**17** Thy children shall make haste against thy destroyers; and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.

**18** Lift up thine eyes round about and behold; all these gather themselves together, and they shall come to thee. And as I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on even as a bride.

**19** For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants; and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away.

**20** The children whom thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the first, shall again in thine ears say: The place is too strait for me; give place to me that I may dwell.

**21** Then shalt thou say in thine heart: Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? And who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where have they been?

Once again, "children making haste against the destroyers," all of the references above dealing with "the weak things" the Lord will be using at this time to "trash the nations," to Redeem Zion, etc. The language of clothing them "as a bride" takes its symbolism from the ten virgins, amongst other places, and connects directly to "the power of the Lamb" already discussed. The glory/intelligence/power/etc. that will be given to babes and sucklings to perform this work—making the cities desolate.

After the church has gone through its loses/purges/cleanses, after the woman (the church) has "lost the first," the remnant will return. As we discussed in previous Isaiah chapters, the song "sing thou barren" takes place, which is tied to this. The thought of the "chosen" members of the church will be "I was left alone, scattered to the four winds—where were these people? I wish that they were here before!"

**Back to Isaiah 49 (1 Nephi 21)**

**22** Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.

**23** And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their face towards the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

**24** For shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captives delivered?

**25** But thus saith the Lord, even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.

**26** And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine; and all flesh shall know that I, the Lord, am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

The manual goes on to explain a lot of spiritual as well as temporal fulfillments to these verses but all past tense. This will yet have a future tense.

**Revelation 12**

> **13** And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.
>
> **14** And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.
>
> **15** And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.
>
> **16** And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.
>
> **17** And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

When Satan realizes that his attempts at taking out the New Jerusalem have failed, he then attacks the "remnant of her seed," i.e., the children. These are members of the church worldwide, the "poor trusting in Zion." But the Lord promises here that he will deliver these people as well and says that the Gentiles might yet have a part to play in their rescue, implying that they could be involved in the rescue process. We know that after this failure to take out the New Jerusalem, the focus becomes taking out Jerusalem. When Christ appears on the Mount of Olives, the Lord will "contend with him that contendeth with thee," and he will pour out judgments, some of which are described in verse 26 and which we know take place at the Mount of Olives, discussed in previous Isaiah chapters.

**Monte S. Nyman**

> [Isaiah chapters 48 and] 49 [are some] of the most important chapters in the whole book of Isaiah, because [they] clearly [foretell] the mission of the Latter-day Saints and the destiny of the land of America in connection with the house of Israel... Chapter 49 is of such importance that it ought to be studied diligently by every member of the Church."
>
> (*"Great Are the Words of Isaiah,"* pp. 173–74; Referenced in *Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 191).

The mission? The return of Joseph Smith Jr., the Redemption of Zion, the building of New Jerusalem, and the Lord coming to that city. Period.

**Orson Pratt**

> And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion and upon her assemblies a cloud and smoke by day, and shining, flaming fire by night; and upon all the glory shall be a defense and there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge and for a covert from storm and from rain. How often I have quoted this passage! I am not tired of quoting it yet. It is among the great events of the latter days; it is among those marvels and wonders that are just at hand. A Zion to be built up; a city of Zion having habitations, and upon these habitations a supernatural light by night, and a supernatural cloud by day. No such event has happened since this prophecy was uttered by the Prophet Isaiah, it remains to be fulfilled in the latter days.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 14, p. 343)

# SECTION V

# Understanding Revelation

*"Behold one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Behold, he shall see and write the remainder of these things; yea, and also many things which have been. And he shall also write concerning the end of the world. Wherefore, the things which he shall write are just and true; and behold they are written in the book which thou beheld proceeding out of the mouth of the Jew; ... And I, Nephi, heard and bear record, that the name of the apostle of the Lamb was John, according to the word of the angel."*

*—Nephi (1 Nephi 14:20–23, 27)*

*"Now, I make this declaration, that those things which John saw in heaven had no allusion to anything that had been on the earth previous to that time, because they were the representation of 'things which must shortly come to pass,' and not of what has already transpired. John saw beasts that had to do with things on the earth, but not in past ages. The beasts which John saw had to devour the inhabitants of the earth in days to come. ...*

*"The book of Revelation is one of the plainest books God ever caused to be written."*

*—Joseph Smith Jr. (TPJS, p. 290)*

# Introduction, Revelation 1–3

## Pyramid of Truth

Before one begins to read and understand Revelation, one must understand the Pyramid of Truth. I understand that there will be those who, in haste, wish to jump to "Understanding Revelation" so they can listen/read for five minutes to see if someone lines up with their own personal opinion, and that's what they mostly are, opinions, before dropping that upvote/downvote and fleeing into the night like some Paul Revere… But in this "war of words and opinions," don't you often ask, "shouldn't there be one answer that's right for everyone? And how shall I know it?"

The answer is the Pyramid of Truth. Anything else is opinion, or worse, intentionally deceptive teachings by wolves in sheep's clothing. So briefly, the question has to be asked, "how should I prioritize revelation from heaven so as to understand doctrine?" The answer is the same for every human being from Adam to today… Not all "revelation" is created equal.

1. Words from Jesus spoken to an individual in the flesh (you need to be careful with this because Satan can appear as an angel of light, you need to know how to discern spirits)
2. Concrete words of the prophet Joseph Smith (or the prophet of your dispensation)
3. The standard works, identified by the head of your dispensation, with greater priority to the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants (scripture written specifically for your dispensation)
4. Concrete words from prophets and apostles who surrounded Joseph Smith (the head of your dispensation)
5. Modern prophets and apostles

The prophet of God on the earth today who holds the keys at this time does not have the rights, privileges, honors, etc. (whichever word you are using) to ***change*** doctrine, only to reveal ***new, additional*** doctrine and ***change procedure.***

***New doctrine cannot conflict with old doctrine, it can only add to it, clarify, shed further light etc.***

Seeing as though Jesus doesn't make it a habit of appearing to all of his members in the flesh frequently, his way is to make his will known to us through his revealer in this last dispensation, Joseph Smith. There is a hierarchy of truth. Jesus sits on the top of this hierarchy and directly underneath him is the prophet of your dispensation (Noah, Abraham, Peter, Joseph etc.).

We, unlike the Muslims, Catholics etc., ***do not*** believe in abrogation or supersessionism etc. As soon as you say that Noah, Peter, Joseph Smith, etc. during their dispensation that they could have been wrong on any revealed doctrine it opens the flood gates of doubt and Satan's influence and allows everything said by them to be re-evaluated. This is one of the oldest and ugliest tricks of Satan.

So, with that said, if I have concrete evidence of doctrine taught by Joseph Smith, I don't care how wise of a scholar another person is, if they teach something contrary to what Joseph Smith taught, I stick with Joseph Smith, until the only thing that can actually supersede him tells me otherwise (that would be Jesus).

## Joseph Smith's Key to Understand Revelation

With that said, what is the most important thing that Joseph Smith taught with respect to the book of Revelation?

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Now, I make this declaration, that those things which John saw in ***heaven had no allusion to anything that had been on the earth previous to that time, because they were the representation of "things which must shortly come to pass," and not of what has already transpired.*** John saw beasts that had to do with things on the earth, but not in past ages. The beasts which John saw had to devour the inhabitants of the earth ***in days to come.*** "And I saw ***when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.*** And I saw, and beheld a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. ***And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.*** And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword." (Rev. 6:1,2,3,4) The book of Revelation is one of the plainest books God ever caused to be written.
>
> ***The revelations do not give us to understand anything of the past in relation to the kingdom of God.***
>
> ("John's Vision of Futurity," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 290)

What Joseph Smith is clearly saying here is that John the Revelator did not see ***anything*** in past dispensations in this revelation. He only saw things pertaining to ***John's time period forward.*** He then, to clear up any doubt of ***what*** he was referring to, proceeds to quote what John was shown directly after ***the first seal and second seal were opened*** and said that this book is the plainest book God has caused to be written. I have taken the quote directly how it appears in the *TPJS* book without editing it in the slightest or omitting anything, that is exactly how it appears and flows. So when you jump into studying the book of Revelation and you use *modern scholars* and you place the events that John described that he was shown directly after the first seal was open as being events in the time of Adam or the first 1000 years of earth's temporal history, you are jumping into the book of Revelation, to understand it, ***with the assumption upfront that Joseph Smith was wrong.***

***I do not make that assumption but rather the exact opposite!*** I know that Joseph Smith was and is the Prophet head of this the last and greatest dispensation, and I know he is correct and I can testify that when one has that understanding the book of Revelation does become a very plain book to understand.

**Revelation 1:1. The Book of Revelation Is an Unveiling**

> **Gerald N. Lund**, who later became a member of the Seventy, explained that the book of Revelation unveils many truths:
>
> "The title of the book in Greek is *Apocalypsis,* from which we get its other common name, the Apocalypse. *Apocalypsis* is formed from two Greek words—*apo,* a preposition denoting separation or removal, and *kalypto,* a verb meaning to cover, hide, or veil. *Apocalypsis,* then, literally means removal of the veil or covering. Hence its title in English, the book of Revelation (or the uncovering or unveiling).
>
> "While many might find the title to be ironic, arguing that few books are more hidden or veiled, it is an appropriate one, for it truly reveals many things. Elder Bruce R. McConkie, in response to the question 'Are we expected to understand the book of Revelation?' answered:
>
> "'Certainly. Why else did the Lord reveal it? The common notion that it deals with beasts and plagues and mysterious symbolisms that cannot

be understood is just not true. … If we apply ourselves with full purpose of heart, we can catch the vision of what the ancient Revelator recorded.' (*Ensign,* Sept. 1975, 87.) …

"If we diligently use the keys that the Lord has given us to interpret the book of Revelation, it can truly become a book of revelation for us" ("Seeing the Book of Revelation as a Book of Revelation," *Ensign,* Dec. 1987, 46, 52).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

This is the first key that has been given to us that we need to understand to unlock the plainness of the book of Revelation—***that it is all future from John's time.***

## Second Witness

"But Micah… Surely we can't just have the words of Joseph Smith to go on! Surely there has to be a second witness to the things of John all being future of John!"

There is!

**1 Nephi 14**

**8** And it came to pass that when the angel had spoken these words, he said unto me: ***Rememberest thou the covenants of the Father unto the house of Israel?*** I said unto him, Yea.

**9** And it came to pass that he said unto me: Look, and behold that great and abominable church, which is the mother of abominations, whose founder is the devil.

**10** And he said unto me: Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth.

**11** And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters; and she had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people.

**12** And it came to pass that I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and its numbers were few, because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God, were also upon all the face of the earth; and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small, because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw.

**13** And it came to pass that I beheld that the great mother of abominations did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God.

**14** And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.

**15** And it came to pass that I beheld that the wrath of God was poured out upon that great and abominable church, insomuch that there were wars and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth.

**16** And as there began to be wars and rumors of wars among all the nations which belonged to the mother of abominations, the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold, the wrath of God is upon the mother of harlots; and behold, thou seest all these things—

**17** And when the day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon the mother of harlots, which is the great and abominable church of all the earth, whose founder is the devil, then, at that day, the work of the Father shall commence, in preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants, which he hath made to his people who are of the house of Israel.

**18** And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, saying: Look!

**19** And I looked and beheld a man, and he was dressed in a white robe.

**20** And the angel said unto me: Behold one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

**21** Behold, ***he shall see and write the remainder of these things***…

I put all these scriptures in context together, because now that we have gone over the section "The Marvelous Work and Wonder" of The Macro Last Day Timeline, we should know not only what these things talk of, but of their literal current day fulfilments.

In quick summary, President Nelson told us to study the promises/covenants made to the house of Israel (verse 8).

President Nelson told us that we are among those that Nephi saw in vision when the power of the Lamb would descend—and later President Nelson said that the power of the Lamb is currently descending (verse 14).

President Nelson told us that between now and when the Lord comes again, we will see the greatest manifestations of the Lord's power, and then references JS–M 1:36, which is the "wrath poured out" (verses 15–17).

All these things are our time! All of these things the Book of Mormon writers were allowed to see ***and write about,*** but the remainder was to be written only by John the Revelator… The footnote the church provides there for "remainder" is:

**Revelation 4**

**1** After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, ***and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.***

So once again, a confirmation that John was shown and wrote not only from John's time period forward, but from the time period that the prophets in The Book of Mormon (and Isaiah) ***ended.*** Let me repeat that—once again, this is a confirmation that what John was shown in the Book of Revelation, was not "things dealing with the past," but of "things to come," and not just simply things "to come from John's time forward," but that it specifically dealt with the time period where Book of Mormon prophets ended their writing, for John wrote ***the remainder.***

**1 Nephi 14**

**23** Wherefore, the things which he shall write are just and true; and behold they are written in the book which thou beheld proceeding out of the mouth of the Jew; and at the time they proceeded out of the mouth of the Jew, or, at the time the book proceeded out of the mouth of the Jew, ***the things which were written were plain and pure, and most precious and easy to the understanding of all men.***

**24** And behold, the things which this apostle of the Lamb shall write are many things ***which thou hast seen; and behold, the remainder shalt thou see.***

**25** ***But the things which thou shalt see hereafter thou shalt not write; for the Lord God hath ordained the apostle of the Lamb of God that he should write them.***

**27** And I, Nephi, heard and bear record, that the name of the apostle of the Lamb was John, according to the word of the angel.

**28** And behold, I, Nephi, am forbidden that I should write the remainder of the things which I saw and heard; wherefore the things which I have written sufficeth me; and I have written but a small part of the things which I saw.

So in conclusion, Nephi was shown it all, but was only allowed to write up to a point; John was shown it all, and was privileged to write it all. Nephi's writings (including his inspired commentary on Isaiah) then

become the bridge, the gateway, the entry point into Understanding Revelation. The "Hobbit" to the "Lord of the Rings" if you will—where our understanding of "The Hobbit" allows us to transition into "The Lord of the Rings" fluidly and with understanding. Proving that John's writings dealt with this time period, the third age of men, and not the second age of men… Sorry, some Lord of the Rings humor…

## Third Witness

"Ok Micah, that one was also good… but surely there is another witness to this?!"

Ok… One more! But then we have to move on, agreed?

**Ether 4**

> **4** Behold, I have written upon these plates the very things which the brother of Jared saw; and there never were greater things made manifest than those which were made manifest unto the brother of Jared.
>
> **5** Wherefore the Lord hath commanded me to write them; and I have written them. And he commanded me that I should seal them up; and he also hath commanded that I should seal up the interpretation thereof; wherefore I have sealed up the interpreters, according to the commandment of the Lord.
>
> **6** For the Lord said unto me: ***They shall not go forth unto the Gentiles until the day that they shall repent of their iniquity, and become clean before the Lord.***
>
> **7** ***And in that day that they shall exercise faith in me, saith the Lord, even as the brother of Jared did, that they may become sanctified in me, then will I manifest unto them the things which the brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my revelations,*** saith Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are.
>
> **8** ***And he that will contend against the word of the Lord, let him be accursed;*** and he that shall deny these things, let him be accursed; for unto them will I show no greater things, saith Jesus Christ; for I am he who speaketh.
>
> **9** And at my command the heavens are opened and are shut; and at my word the earth shall shake; and at my command the inhabitants thereof shall pass away, even so as by fire.
>
> **10** And he that believeth not my words believeth not my disciples; and if it so be that I do not speak, judge ye; for ye shall know that it is I that speaketh, at the last day.
>
> **11** But he that believeth these things which I have spoken, him will I visit with the manifestations of my Spirit, and he shall know and bear record. For because of my Spirit he shall know that these things are true; for it persuadeth men to do good.
>
> **12** And whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do good is of me; for good cometh of none save it be of me. I am the same that leadeth men to all good; he that will not believe my words will not believe me—that I am; and he that will not believe me will not believe the Father who sent me. For behold, I am the Father, I am the light, and the life, and the truth of the world.
>
> **13** Come unto me, O ye Gentiles, and I will show unto you the greater things, the knowledge which is hid up because of unbelief.
>
> **14** Come unto me, O ye house of Israel, and it shall be made manifest unto you how great things the Father hath laid up for you, from the foundation of the world; and it hath not come unto you, because of unbelief.
>
> **15** Behold, ***when ye shall rend that veil of unbelief which doth cause you to remain in your awful state of wickedness, and hardness of heart, and blindness of mind, then shall the great and marvelous things which have been hid up from the foundation of the world from you—yea, when ye shall call upon the Father in my name, with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, then shall ye know that the Father hath remembered the covenant which he made unto your fathers, O house of Israel.***
>
> **16** ***And then shall my revelations which I have caused to be written by my servant John be unfolded in the eyes of all the people. Remember, when ye see these things, ye shall know that the time is at hand that they shall be made manifest in very deed.***

Once again (tired of me saying that yet?), I kept the scriptures entirely in context so that you can get the idea of the depth of the points of reference being addressed here… With "The Marvelous Work and Wonder" under our belts, what's being discussed here? We have the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon—the visions and writing of the Brother of Jared—and we are told, or rather given straight forward, some points of reference from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself… Are we ready to receive them?

1. The Brother of Jared's writing is sealed and hidden.
2. The veil of unbelief is rent, and all that includes (e.g. "The Power of the Lamb").
3. The Lord remembers the covenants made to Israel (there is your Nephi tie-in with the Power of the Lamb and the Redemption of Zion, etc.).
4. The sealed portion is given and people contend against the Word (verse 8), which proves that we have not passed the Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord, as there are still those around ***capable*** of "contending against this new word" (2 Nephi 29, in fact). After the Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord, there will be no more telestial people around to contend.
5. As the Power of the Lamb is descending, and as the veil is being rent, etc., "the revelations of John will be unfolded in the eyes of all the people"—people in the Church will finally start to have their eyes open to the prophetic picture and understand Revelation and where it fits in. And who shall be the ones "opening the eyes of understanding" in that time period?

**2 Nephi 27**

> **24** And again it shall come to pass that the Lord shall say unto him that shall read the words that shall be delivered him:
>
> **25** Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men—
>
> **26** Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, ***for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.***
>
> 33 Therefore, thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.
>
> **34** ***But when he seeth his children, the work of my hands,*** in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.

**Doctrine and Covenants 128**

> **18** …And not only this, but those things ***which never have been revealed from the foundation of the world, but have been kept hid from the wise and prudent, shall be revealed unto babes and sucklings in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times.***

Finishing up the points of reference above:

6. ***"Remember, when ye see these things, ye shall know that the time is at hand that they shall be made manifest in very deed." …So it isn't until we reach this point of reference that finally, what John wrote will begin to be made manifest***—meaning, what John wrote ***doesn't even begin to take place until that time period.***

You who are having your eyes opened to the true understanding of The Macro Last Day Timeline and specifically the Book of Revelation and its place in it, are a fulfilment of this prophecy, and shortly we will begin to see what John wrote manifested in very deed. Is President Nelson a prophet of God? Well then Covid was the desolating sickness… Well then the Power of the Lamb is descending… Well then the veil is being rent… Well then what John wrote is being unfolded in the eyes of the people… Well then what John wrote is about to be manifest in very deed… Well then… "Time is running out."

## Understanding Revelation: Chapters 1–3

A lot of members don't see the need to study the first three chapters of Revelation or they are too awestruck and interested in the later chapters so they omit the first three. But the first three chapters might be the most important chapters in Revelation with regard to the true Saints of God. The ten virgins, the parable of the nobleman and the olive trees etc. etc., there is an abundance of scriptural warnings, promises etc. dealing with the time period directly before the redemption of Zion and the building of New Jerusalem. The first three chapters of Revelation give us a lot of information pertinent to Saints during this crucial time period. These chapters are part of the very small "crossover" in the Book of Revelation.

**Why study Revelation?**

> The book of Revelation encourages followers of Jesus Christ to remain faithful in the midst of persecution and trials…The book also reveals much important information about the events leading up to the Second Coming and the Millennium. Prayerful study of this book can bring you a deeper understanding of the resurrected and glorified Son of God and His dealings with God's children throughout the ages of earth's history, particularly in the last days.
>
> ("Chapter 53: Revelation 1–3," *New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

Those who study Understanding Isaiah will pick up on the similarities and also the macro time period. Those who prayerfully study and understand Revelation will "have their faith of the Savior increased and the knowledge or will of the Lord, particularly regarding the last days, deepened."

**When and where was Revelation written?**

> Revelation was written at a time when Christians were facing false teachings, apathy, and severe persecution (see Revelation 1:9; 2:4, 10, 14–15; 3:16; 6:9). Most likely this persecution came at the hands of Roman officials in the later years of the reign of Domitian (A.D. 81–96). Domitian revived the practice of emperor worship and exiled or executed those who did not worship gods approved by the state.
>
> ("Chapter 53: Revelation 1–3," *New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

We have a time period of trials and tribulation where the Church was being infested by false teachings, apathy etc. and the government of the land was deciding who, what and when you could worship. Once again, *The Marvelous Work and Wonder* and *Understanding Isaiah.*

**To whom was Revelation written and why?**

> John wrote a message of hope and encouragement to those in his day who still adhered to the teachings of Jesus Christ (see Revelation 1:4, 11). The first three chapters of the book of Revelation were specifically addressed to seven branches of the Church in Asia Minor (see Revelation 1:4, 11; 2–3). … They may have been among only a few branches that were still faithful and had not succumbed to apostasy and persecution.
>
> The faithful members of the Church lived in times of intense persecution, with all the Apostles gone except John, who was now in exile, and with many factions and problems in the Church. As a result, the Saints were in great need of the encouraging message found in Revelation. John reassured them that God was in control, Jesus Christ's ultimate triumph over evil would be complete, and the hopes of all Christians would ultimately be realized.
>
> ("Chapter 53: Revelation 1–3," *New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

So why are the first three books of Revelation important? If you are the type of member that feels like the last grape on the vine, wondering where all the other grapes are, if you are the type of member who still takes debt seriously, still takes the sin of homosexuality seriously, still takes communism/socialism seriously, still takes obeying the laws of the land seriously etc., the first three chapters of Revelation were written to you. In the Understanding Isaiah series we talked about the "righteous element" that was left alone feeling abandoned in the dirt—same people, same time period. It also provides once again the blueprint for tests, persecutions, tribulations, sanctification, etc. that will occur before "the hopes of all Christians would ultimately be realized" i.e., the redemption and building of New Jerusalem.

The manual summarizes this thus:

**What are some distinctive features of Revelation?**

> The structure of the book is suggested in Revelation 1:19. John wrote about the things he had seen—the vision of Jesus Christ (see Revelation 1), "the things which are" (conditions in the Church of his day; see Revelation 2–3), and "the things which shall be hereafter" (see Revelation 4–22). The book of Revelation, understood with the aid of latter-day revelation… concentrating particularly on the time preceding the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the great millennial era of peace.
>
> The book contains promises to faithful Saints who overcome evil (see Revelation 2–3).
>
> ("Chapter 53: Revelation 1–3," *New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

## Revelation Chapter 1

**Revelation 1**

**1** The Revelation of John, a servant of God, which was given unto him of Jesus Christ, to show unto his servants ***things which must shortly come to pass,*** that he sent and signified by his angel unto his servant John,

**2** Who bore record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

**3** Blessed are they who ***read,*** and they who ***hear*** and ***understand*** the words of this prophecy, and ***keep*** those things which are written therein, for the time of the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

**Revelation 1:3. "Blessed Is He That"**

> The progression of actions described in Revelation 1:3—read, hear, and keep—shows that besides reading or hearing the book of Revelation (or any other book of scripture), we must also "keep those things which are written therein." By doing all of these things, we receive the promised blessings. The Joseph Smith Translation of verse 3 adds the word understand to this sequence, showing the importance of understanding the teachings of this book (see the Bible appendix).
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

**Revelation 1**

**4** Now this is the testimony of John to the seven servants who are over the seven churches in Asia. Grace unto you, and peace from him who is, and who was, and who is to come; who hath sent forth his angel from before his throne, to testify unto those who are the seven servants over the seven churches.

**5** Therefore, I, John, the faithful witness, bear record of the things which were delivered me of the angel, and from Jesus Christ the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.

**6** And unto him who loved us, be glory; who washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us ***kings and priests*** unto God, his Father. To him be glory and dominion, forever and ever. Amen.

We know that those who endure the tribulation will be those whom the Lord will use to "make up his jewels" in that day. We know that the Lord will be "King of kings and Lord of lords." If we faithfully endure we will be made kings and priests. A lot of "anti" floats around about Latter-day Saints believing they (if proved faithful) will be made in reality kings and priests, and we must confess that we do believe not only in the words of John here spoken, but in his testimony that these specific words came from angels, as well as the Savior himself. If ye deny this, ye deny the entirety and scope of the entire work which is "the Book of Revelation."

**Revelation 1**

**7** For behold, he cometh in the clouds with ten thousands of his saints in the kingdom, clothed with the glory of his Father. And every eye shall see him; and they who pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

**8** For he saith, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the Lord, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.

**Revelation 1:8. "The Almighty"**

> The title "Almighty" is the English translation of the Greek word Pantokrator, which suggests one who rules and regulates all things. One theme of the book of Revelation is that even though God's people in all ages face persecution and trouble, God does indeed govern all things and will one day put an end to all evil.
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

"When ***every eye*** shall see the Lord come"—that is referring to the Great and Dreadful Day, which is "the end of the world" or "the destruction of the wicked." Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet. It would be like saying (for English speakers) "I am the A and the Z" once again, tying back to the Great and Dreadful Day. "I was with the Father before we created man and I will be there when wickedness is swept from the face of the Earth." A theme you should hopefully already be picking up strongly is that of "tribulation and persecution and trouble." We should know why understanding these three chapters of Revelation are timely at this period for Saints.

**Revelation 1**

**9** I John, who also am your brother, ***and companion in tribulation,*** and in the kingdom and ***patience*** of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, ***for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.***

Once again, "tribulation," and the call for "patience"—we also have the first identifier of why we will have tribulation/persecution/etc. and that is ***"for the word of God*** and the testimony of Jesus Christ." For us actually on the watchtower, we know that to stand "for the word of God" on any important topic—priestcraft, sexuality, idolatry, etc. you will and are suffering persecution.

**President Nelson** taught:

> Why do we need such resilient faith? Because difficult days are ahead. Rarely in the future will it be easy or popular to be a faithful Latter-day Saint. Each of us will be tested. The Apostle Paul warned that in the latter days, those who diligently follow the Lord "shall suffer persecution." That very persecution can either crush you into silent weakness or motivate you to be more exemplary and courageous in your daily lives.
>
> ("Face the Future with Faith," General Conference, April 2011)

**Revelation 1**

**10** I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

**11** Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

**12** And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

**Revelation 1:12, 20. What Is the Symbolism of the Seven Candlesticks?**

> The imagery of the "seven golden candlesticks" (Revelation 1:12, 20) recalls the seven-branched menorah found in the Jerusalem temple. These candlesticks represented the seven churches. They were established to give light to the world, just as the Savior had commanded His disciples to do (see Matthew 5:15–16).
>
> **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** noted: "Candlesticks carry light; they do not create it. Their function is to make it available, not to bring it into being. So by using seven candlesticks to portray the seven churches to whom John is now to give counsel, the Lord is showing that his congregations on earth are to carry his light to the world. Christ is the Light of the world. (John 8:12.) 'Hold up your light that it may shine unto the world. Behold I am the light which ye shall hold up—that which ye have seen me do.' (3 Ne. 18:24; Matt. 5:14–16.)" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 3:442).
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

Once again we have a reminder to us, this group of people, of the dangers of priestcraft. We are to be candlesticks, not candles, we are to carry the Lord's light and will forward, not our own; we are not to set ourselves up as a light for the purpose of "gain." Those that overlook priestcraft do so at great peril to their salvation let alone exaltation.

**Revelation 1**

**13** And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

**Revelation 1:13. The Savior Is in Our Midst**

> In John's vision, he saw Jesus Christ "in the midst of the seven candlesticks," showing symbolically that He was with or among the seven ancient churches (Revelation 1:13). During His mortal ministry, Jesus promised, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). The assurance that Jesus Christ is with His Saints and watches over them is also found in modern scripture, such as in Doctrine and Covenants 38:7: "Verily, verily, I say unto you that mine eyes are upon you. I am in your midst and ye cannot see me."
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

This brings up images of the fourth watch principle—the Lord is watching. Also remember Joseph Smith—he will also be watching. Both "in the midst, but ye cannot see me."

**Revelation 1**

**14** His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

**15** And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

**16** And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

**17** And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

**18** I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

**19** Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things ***which are,*** and the things ***which shall be hereafter;***

The keys of death and hell include the keys over the resurrection, keys which Brigham Young said Joseph Smith will hold/does hold and will bring back with him once he is resurrected—keys that the Savior won and obtained through the shedding of His blood. We also have yet another reference to let us know that this book, the book of Revelation, deals with ***the present and the future*** from John, ***not the past.***

**Revelation 1**

**20** The mystery of the seven servants of the seven churches which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the servants of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

The LDS manual lists "possible interpretations" for these symbols which is somewhat confusing considering the JST teaches plainly what each of the symbols represents. Another connection for "seven servants" directly to this time period can be found in:

## Micah 5

**5** And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him ***seven shepherds, and eight principal men.***

**6** And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof: thus shall he deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders.

**7** And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the LORD, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.

**8** ¶ And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

**(11–12) Micah 5:5–15. Will Israel Become Powerful?**

Still looking into the far distant future, Micah prophesied of the great last battles through which Israel, under Christ, will at last triumph over all enemies. "In this relation the Messiah is called the Prince of peace in [Isaiah 9:6], as securing peace for Israel in a higher and more perfect sense than Solomon. But in what manner? This is explained more fully in what follows: viz. (1) by defending Israel against the attacks of the imperial power (vers. 5 b, 6); (2) by exalting it into a power able to overcome the nations (vers. 7–9); and (3) by exterminating all the materials of war, and everything of an idolatrous nature, and so preventing the possibility of war (vers. 10–15). Asshur is a type [symbol] of the nations of the world by which the people of the Lord are attacked, because in the time of the prophet this power was the imperial power by which Israel was endangered. Against this enemy Israel will set up seven, yea eight princes, who, under the chief command of the Messiah, i.e. as His subordinates, will drive it back, and press victoriously into its land. … Seven is mentioned as the number of the works proceeding from God, so that seven shepherds, i.e. princes, would be quite sufficient; and this number is surpassed by the eight, to express the thought that there might be even more than were required." (C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament,* 10:1:486–87.)

When Christ appeared to the Nephites, He quoted this prophecy of Micah (compare 3 Nephi 21:12–21and Micah 5:8–15) to stress the power that would be upon Israel as the Lord gathered them out from the nations and by them purified those Gentiles who would hear His word. Those who would not hear His word and opposed His work would be cut off and trodden down.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 122)

## Revelation Chapter 2

**Revelation 2**

**1** Unto the servant of the church of ***Ephesus*** write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;

**Revelation 2–3. The Lord's Instructions to the Seven Churches**

Ephesus: Largest city in Asia Minor. Famous for its magnificent temple…

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

It's safe to guess that if this city was to have its counterpart today, and if such letters were written today, the first letter would be sent to Salt Lake City Utah, the largest city in Utah famous for its temple.

**Revelation 2**

**2** I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

**Revelation 2:2. "Them Which Say They Are Apostles, and Are Not"**

To read more about false apostles who were teaching in Ephesus, see Acts 20:17–18, 28–30. Paul described these false apostles and others like them as "grievous wolves" (Acts 20:29) and as men who would arise ***from among the Saints*** and speak "perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:30; see also 2 Corinthians 11:13–14, 26; 1 John 4:1–3).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

This is so relevant that it actually hurts my heart writing it. There are those right now, mostly in Utah, claiming to have seen Christ and the Father in their living rooms, to have been made in reality members of the 144,000 and have been "partially translated." There are those in Utah who claim to hold the mantle of "Defender of Joseph Smith," who openly teach against the need to following the living prophet, President Nelson. They are grievous wolves speaking perverse things with the attempt to draw disciples after them for gain (i.e., priestcraft). They have been "tried" by the word of God and have been found to be liars. Take care Saints, take care… This is part of "the test" and many are already failing.

**Revelation 2**

**3** And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

**4** Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

Remember that the Lord is talking to the candlesticks, which are not individual members, they are "the church," meaning the Lord very likely is not talking to the same members in these two statements, he is in fact talking to two different groups. One group has borne with patience, laboured, and has not fainted for the Lord's sake while the other "has left thy first love." This is a "righteous remnant" vs. "tares" breakdown, this is the Lord answering a lot of members' question, and that question? "How do I know I am wheat? How do I know I am not a tare? How do I, if I am a tare, become wheat?" Pay attention saints!

**Revelation 2**

**5** Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

We should be familiar with this. The parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees and the Lord promising that it will begin "at My house, first among those among you who profess to know Me…" The "first work" is "the tower," it is the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem, and the warning is that if that city does not repent and remember that "first work" it will be removed—assuming the reason for this is to remove any doubt on "if the Lord is going to fulfill every word" and if "Salt Lake City is the New Jerusalem"… The Lord will simply "remove the candlestick out of his place," like casting the fig tree that refused to produce the required fruit into the sea.

**Revelation 2**

**6** But this thou hast, that thou hatest ***the deeds of the Nicolaitans,*** which I also hate.

**7** He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that ***overcometh*** will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

**Revelation 2:6, 15. "The Doctrine of the Nicolaitans"**

> The Nicolaitans were "an Antinomian sect in Asia Minor that claimed license for sensual sin" (Bible Dictionary, "Nicolaitans"). Antinomians were permissive Christians who claimed that the grace of God freed them from having to obey commandments. The Lord commended some Saints for rejecting the deeds of the Nicolaitans, while chastising other Saints for holding to the doctrine of the Nicolaitans (see Revelation 2:6, 15). Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained that the Nicolaitans referred to in the book of Revelation were "members of the Church who were trying to maintain their church standing while continuing to live after the manner of the world" (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 3:446).
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

Wolves in sheep's clothing. Those that profess to know me but do not etc. etc. Members who wish to maintain their church standings but live "progressive" or "liberal" or "after the manner of the world." Such feared man more than God, such went hand in hand with Babylon, such did not overcome, such will not eat of the tree of life. "Love, joy, peace, grace, etc." with a contempt for obedience to commandments. Shouldn't be hard to recognize this today.

**Revelation 2**

**8** And unto the servant of the church in ***Smyrna*** write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;

**Revelation 2–3. The Lord's Instructions to the Seven Churches**

> Smyrna: Early center of emperor worship. Major shipping port and trade center.
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

Emperor worship is idolatry. Cities within the United States that are known for their idolatry? Also are ports for trade? California, New York, and Washington D.C. all seem to fit this description.

**Revelation 2**

**9** I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

**10** Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

**11** He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that ***overcometh*** shall not be hurt of the second death.

We have here a clear warning that there will be those faithful cast into prison and also put to death for their faith. Those that endure faithfully will inherit Celestial glory while those that deny the faith and save their lives will not. Period. There is also a mention of the relative poverty difference, he went as far as to call the Saints there "poor physically, but rich spiritually."

There is no general call out from specific locations as every location has their own path for exaltation. This doesn't mean however that certain paths are not "less painful" vs others, and right now, where we make the choice to plant our feet, directly determines that path. Some of us might go to jail, some of us might die, and unless we have the testimony we will fall—if you don't desire to pass through certain events, move.

**Orson Pratt**

> What! This great and powerful nation of ours to be divided one part against the other and many hundreds of thousands of souls to be destroyed by civil wars!" Not a word of it would they believe. They do not believe what is still in the future. . The time will come when there will be no safety in carrying on the peaceable pursuits of farming or agriculture. But these will be neglected, and the people will think themselves well off if they can flee from city to city, from town to town and escape with their lives. Thus will the Lord visit the people, if they will not repent.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 12, Discourse 65, p. 344)

**John Taylor**

> Were we surprised when the last terrible war [Civil War] took place here in the United States? No; … You will see worse things than that, for God will lay his hand upon this nation, and they will feel it more terribly than ever they have done before. There will be more bloodshed, more ruin, more devastation than ever they have seen before. Write it down! You will see it come to pass; it is only just starting in. … there is yet to come a sound of war, trouble and distress, in which brother will be arrayed against brother, father against son, son against father, a scene of desolation and destruction that will permeate our land until it will be a vexation to hear the report thereof.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 20, Discourse 41, p. 318)

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

> **66** And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God;

**67** And the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion.

**68** And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety.

**69** And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another.

**70** And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore we cannot stand.

**71** And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy.

**Revelation 2:13. "Thou Holdest Fast My Name"**

Christians who were sentenced by Roman officials to prison or death could sometimes save themselves by cursing Christ and worshipping the emperor instead. John recorded the Lord's praise for the Saints in Pergamos for "holding fast" His name, even under threat of death (Revelation 2:13; see also Revelation 2:25; 3:3, 11). A recurring phrase in Revelation 2–3 is the admonition to "hold fast" to the truth (see Revelation 2:13, 25; 3:3, 11). **President M. Russell Ballard** of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that to "hold fast" to the truth, found in the word of God, means to "hearken to it, follow the principles taught therein, and cling to those principles as though our very lives depended on it—which, if we are speaking of spiritual life, is literally true" ("Be Strong in the Lord," *Ensign,* July 2004, 10).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

**Revelation 2**

**12** And to the servant of the church in ***Pergamos*** write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

**Revelation 2–3. The Lord's Instructions to the Seven Churches**

Pergamos: Provincial center for emperor worship. Three temples dedicated to emperor worship. Library housed over 200,000 scrolls.

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

What is the new center for idolatry worship? Silicon Valley. It doesn't take much creativity to come up with "three major idolatry companies" in the area.

**Revelation 2**

**13** I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

**Revelation 2:12–13. What Was "Satan's Seat"?**

John recorded that "Satan's seat" was in Pergamos and commended the Saints in Pergamos for not denying the faith even though much wickedness surrounded them (see Revelation 2:12–13). **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** defined "Satan's seat":

"Pergamos was the center of the state religion of Rome, a religion in which the emperor was worshipped, and to which Christians must adhere or suffer death. It was a religion imposed upon them by the sword. Here Christ announces that he—out of whose mouth goeth 'a sharp twoedged sword' (Rev. 1:16)—has eternal power, power beyond the life and death dominion of Rome, power which will pierce and slay the wicked as with a sword. See Heb. 4:12–13. …

"'Under Augustus a temple was built at Pergamum [Pergamos], probably 29 B.C., and dedicated to Rome and Augustus, and Pergamum became the center of the imperial worship and "Satan's throne" [seat].' [J. R. Dummelow, ed., *The One Volume Bible Commentary* (1936), 1075.]" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 3:449–50).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

A couple things of importance to note here. There will be two different "seats of power" as things wrap up—one seat of Satan's power for Ephraim and the Assyrian, and the other seat for Judah and the Middle East. I have already identified what I believe to be the most likely candidate for the "seat of Satan's power" in America/Ephraim, and that is Silicon Valley, but this information provided by the Angel and subsequently John might be more literal than people realize. Later on, we will read how Satan will "give his seat of power" to the beast. It is here identified that the seat of Satan in the Middle East is "Pergamos," which is in modern day Turkey. This is why a lot of individuals assume the "false prophet" will start in Turkey. The Assyrians will be headquartered in Silicon Valley while the beast kingdoms, according to many, could start with Turkey. I believe we are already seeing the fruit of this today in 2020.

UPDATE 2023: The Assyrians have only gotten stronger—elections stolen, political opponents thrown in jail, etc. Also, in the "And He Spake A Parable Unto Them" chapter, the "Spirit of the Earth" confirmed to me personally, that yes, this is the "seat of Satan's power" or the "chains of his dominion."

**Revelation 2**

**14** But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

**15** So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

**16** Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

**Revelation 2:14. "The Doctrine of Balaam"**

Balaam was an Old Testament prophet, whose actions are recorded in Numbers 22–24; 31:16. He appeared at first to be true to the Lord and His people, repeatedly refusing Balak's request to curse Israel. Nevertheless, Balaam eventually succumbed to Balak's offer of riches and taught Balak how to cause the army of Israel to weaken themselves through sexual sin and idolatry (see Numbers 25:1–5; 31:13–16). The plan included having Moabite women seduce the men of Israel and persuade them to offer sacrifices to heathen gods, thus destroying them spiritually.

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** defined the doctrine of Balaam as being willing "to divine [prophesy] for hire; to give counsel contrary to the divine will; to pervert the right way of the Lord—all with a view to gaining wealth and the honors of men. In effect, to preach for money, or to gain personal power and influence. In the very nature of things such a course is a perversion of the right way of the Lord. See 2 Pet. 2:10–22" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 3:450).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

We've already read about the doctrine of Nicolaitans above. They are members in name only. They want to be treated like virtuous saints while pushing progressive and evil ideology—these are Satan's progressive element in the church. This city, however, is also weakening the people of God with idolotry, priestcraft, materialism, coveting, and sexual sin. Facebook, Google, YouTube, X (formerly known as Twitter), Instagram, etc. are the means of transmitting porn, vainglory, priestcraft (which is just vainglory in the church), etc., etc. throughout the

land. The saints that partake of those fruits will be weakened. This further cements in my mind the clearness of this location being the birth of the Assyrian, which I was looking for after the "desolating sickness" to start making its move.

UPDATE 2023: It has.

**Revelation 2**

**17** He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that ***overcometh*** will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

**Revelation 2:17. "Hidden Manna" and "a White Stone"**

> The Lord provided life-sustaining manna for the children of Israel to eat during their 40-year sojourn in the wilderness (see Exodus 16:15, 35). Just as the manna sustained physical life, Jesus Christ is the "bread of life" that sustains spiritual life (John 6:35, 48). The "hidden manna" mentioned in Revelation 2:17 refers to Jesus Christ. Jesus is "hidden" from the wicked. But, as He taught in John 6, those who symbolically partake of His flesh will receive everlasting life (see John 6:47–58).
>
> Revelation 2:17 states this instruction to the churches: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name." For revealed insight into the meaning of the white stone, see Doctrine and Covenants 130:8–11.
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

Don't make the same mistake that the Jews made in the time of Jesus. Jesus was the manna promised here. If you are once again, hoping that even as you worship idolatry (i.e., your cars, clothes, makeup, TVs, cell phones, Netflix, etc. etc. etc.) ***and neglect your temporal salvation*** that the Lord will rain "manna down from heaven"—you will be ***sorely mistaken.*** The Savior is the promised reward and He is a far worthier prize to be won than some mere sustenance.

The understanding of the stone found in **Doctrine and Covenants 130: 8–11,** which reads:

> **8** The place where God resides is a great Urim and Thummim.
>
> **9** This earth, in its sanctified and immortal state, will be made like unto crystal and will be a Urim and Thummim to the inhabitants who dwell thereon, whereby all things pertaining to an inferior kingdom, or all kingdoms of a lower order, will be manifest to those who dwell on it; and this earth will be Christ's.
>
> **10** Then the white stone mentioned in Revelation 2:17, will become a Urim and Thummim to each individual who receives one, whereby things pertaining to a higher order of kingdoms will be made known;
>
> **11** And a white stone is given to each of those who come into the celestial kingdom, whereon is a new name written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it. The new name is the key word.

**Revelation 2**

**18** And unto the servant of the church in ***Thyatira*** write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;

**Revelation 2–3. The Lord's Instructions to the Seven Churches**

> Thyatira: Famous for wool dyeing. A military city. Principle deity was Tyrimnas (sun god) who was often portrayed with military prowess.
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

These are cities such as those around the Mountain Home, Idaho area (Boise–Rexburg) known for its air base. This area is actually marked for landing from nuclear weapons due to the military nature of the area. The reasons continue as we keep reading.

**Revelation 2**

**19** I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.

**20** Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman ***Jezebel,*** which ***calleth herself a prophetess,*** to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

**21** And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

**22** Behold, I will cast her into hell, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

**23** And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

After reading about Julie Rowe and her effect specifically on ***this part of the world,*** and what she was teaching, and the church trying to get her to repent and stop, etc., I couldn't help but feel like this was a direct dualistic fulfillment to this prophesy playing out in real time once again.

**Revelation 2**

**24** But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

**25** But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.

The Lord is not going to condemn everyone from that part of the world—just those who fell away with their "prophetess" (her "children")—so long as they hold fast to what they already have till the Lord comes. Don't be fooled by false prophets. The current prophet is President Nelson, and only President Nelson, until Joseph Smith returns. There is not and will not be any "prophetess." When the Prophet of God speaks, urges, councils us, etc., we follow—or we are following after our own gods.

**Revelation 2**

**26** And to him who ***overcometh,*** and keepeth my commandments unto the end, will I give power over many kingdoms;

**27** And he shall rule them with the word of God; and they shall be in his hands as the vessels of clay in the hands of a potter; and he shall govern them by faith, with equity and justice, even as I received of my Father.

**28** And I will give him the morning star.

**29** He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Potter's clay, ruling with the word of God, the Law, etc., etc. This is 2 Nephi 27. This is Joseph Smith returning. This is New Jerusalem. This is where the faithful will be made kings and priestesses to rule under Christ, who will stand as King of kings. To be given "the morning star" is to be given the tabernacle of Christ to dwell with us and among us. The manual explains:

**Revelation 2:28. "I Will Give Him the Morning Star"**

> "The morning star" is a symbol of Jesus Christ (Revelation 2:28; 22:16). The promise of "the morning star" is given to him "that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end" (Revelation 2:26). It may be the promise of the Second Comforter, of which the **Prophet Joseph Smith** taught, "When any man obtains this [Second] Comforter, he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him, or appear unto him from

time to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him, and they will take up their abode with him, and the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him, and the Lord will teach him face to face" (in *History of the Church,* 3:381).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

## Revelation Chapter 3

**Revelation 3**

**1** And unto the servant of the church in ***Sardis,*** write; These things saith he who hath the seven stars, which are the seven servants of God; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

**Revelation 2–3. The Lord's Instructions to the Seven Churches**

Sardis: Crossroads of five major highways. Reputation for great wealth and low moral standards.

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

This would be cities like Las Vegas, Nevada. You will notice that all of these cities I have mentioned so far were, in fact, early places that the saints travelled to and made their home per President Brigham Young's direction—almost like "12 olive trees" or "stakes."

**Revelation 3**

**2** Be watchful therefore, and strengthen those who remain, who are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

**3** Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

**4** Thou hast ***a few names*** even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

**5** He that ***overcometh,*** the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

**6** He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

There are "few" who live in cities known for their "great wealth and low moral standards" and belong to the church whose garments are white. Once again, those who overcome vs those who do not. Once again, there is a path for everyone to be saved, but that doesn't mean whatever city you decide to live in comes complete with the exact same tribulations. If you don't think you can fight the tribulation in the area you are in, move. Remember, we remove ourselves from these places not because we believe ourselves "better than," but because we know we're not "good enough" to stay in such situations and come out "overcoming all." If this is you—move. Grace only applies "after all we can do" (2 Ne. 25:23). If we haven't done "all we can do," in vain do we supplicate for the Lord's grace.

**Revelation 3**

**7** And to the angel of the church in ***Philadelphia*** write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;

**Revelation 2–3. The Lord's Instructions to the Seven Churches**

Philadelphia: Called the "gateway to the east." A city known for its wine production, center for worship Bacchaus, the god of wine. Relatively unimportant city in its day.

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

The key of David is a reference to Isaiah 22—keys which were used to open and lock doors in the temple, with obvious similitude to actual priesthood keys. The chapter subheading for Isaiah 22 is "Jerusalem shall be attacked and scourged." I would mark these cities as "flyover country" or "the Heartland of America," which is full of many cities that the world deems to be of little or no value, and are known for their agriculture and possibly even "worship" of agriculture. To those in New York, the heartland is "flyover country," i.e., it is simply the gateway to the east. This is small town America.

**Revelation 3**

**8** I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

**9** Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

**10** Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

This group of Saints, although they have very little power or strength in the Church collectively or politically or culturally, ***have kept the faith and remained true, and God promises them that they will not have to pass through the same tribulations. I believe this to be a direct blessing in direct connection to that of these Saints giving up Babylon.***

You give up a lot of Babylon "perks" when you live out of the city, in the country. Internet, movies, restaurants, shopping, etc.—the list is extensive. And the Lord here is rewarding them for making that choice and living that lifestyle, in that they will not have to pass through the same tribulations that the rest of the Church/America does—they have prepared themselves temporally, with oil in their lamps. If you are worried about your faith, endurance, patience, etc. in tribulation, but you have no fear or reservation about "leaving Babylon," you might want to consider moving to a farmstead. This is further a potential fulfillment to D&C 38: the Lord will not give one righteous son robes and another righteous son rags any more than He will give a righteous son robes and an unrighteous son robes!

Verse 9 is an impossible one to unpack without offending someone—which is exactly what the Lord said would happen when he does this:

**2 Nephi 27**

**26** Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.

**27** And wo unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord! And their works are in the dark; and they say: Who seeth us, and who knoweth us? And they also say: ***Surely, your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay.*** But behold, I will show unto them, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I know all their works. For shall the work say of him that made it, he made me not? Or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, he had no understanding?

**28** But behold, saith the Lord of Hosts: I will show unto the children of men that it is yet a very little while ***and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field; and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest.***

**29** And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.

In the days of The Marvelous Work and Wonder, these people well outside of Salt Lake City in the farmland will be esteemed highly, while the Saints who remain in the city in "which they say they are [Saints], and are not, but do lie," "they call themselves of the holy city, [but yet don't] stay themselves upon the God of Israel," etc.—those saints will

"worship at the feet" of those who removed themselves from Babylon and these cities.

To further cement that last point, footnote 9a (worship) takes you to Isaiah 49 and 60.

Footnote 10b (temptation) takes you to Topical Guide: Temptation; Test, Try, Prove.

If you wish to remain in such situations, you better be strong enough to ***"overcome all in such situations"***... There is no additional grace for intentional, ignorant, rebellious, and deliberate choices on our part. We sleep in the bed we make, which is the entire moral of the story and warning of the Ten Virgins—the unprepared virgins were not given additional grace; they had to eat their choices brought on by life priorities.

**Revelation 3**

**11** Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

This verse is interesting because the Lord tells these people to "hold fast to that which thou hast," past tense, that somebody doesn't come and take your crown. These individuals, many, have their calling and election made sure, the promise from the Lord that they will be His when He makes up His jewels. His jewels in His crown are the kings of which He is king over. The tribulation for most Saints is the path for their salvation. These individuals have already arrived; they simply need to hold out faithful. Such a wonderful, emotionally comforting moment for these Saints, as well as powerful warning not to go back to sleep...

In the next verse, Jesus Christ, the son of God, clarifies beyond any reasonable doubt that this is all build up for Zion, the New Jerusalem.

**Revelation 3**

**12** Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

This is absolutely referring to the New Jerusalem in Jackson County, Missouri. These are the "few," these are "those that feared the Lord and meet together often," these are the "jewels recorded in the Lambs book" and he says ***"Hold on! Don't give up that crown!*** Don't think you can go at it alone and throw away your place! You shall be mine, your name written in New Jerusalem!"

How many in this group I wish had heard and heeded this heartfelt, emotional plea from the Lord...

**Revelation 3**

**13** He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

**14** And unto the angel of the church of the ***Laodiceans*** write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

**Revelation 2–3. The Lord's Instructions to the Seven Churches**

> Laodiceans: Wealthy, commercial and banking center. ... Medical school produced an eye salve.
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

These are the upper-middle-class suburban neighborhoods. They are full of people in the medical profession, banking, etc. These are members who have experienced a sense of accomplishment and haven't left the Church, but don't take it all too seriously. Apathy is a plague in this community. It's important to note that this group might think that they aren't "that bad" or that there's not that much difference between the suburban lifestyle member and the countryside member, but the Lord provided no counsel or chastisement for the previous group, while providing no praise or commendation for this group. Having money and large houses doesn't make one "independent" (D&C 78:14). So, to the Lord, there is a big contrast between these two groups, and He makes this clear in the following verses.

**Revelation 3:**

**15** I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

**16** So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

**17** Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

**Revelation 3:15–16. "I Would Thou Wert Cold or Hot"**

> Hot springs at Hierapolis, a short distance north of Laodicea, sent steaming waters into the streams that flowed southward. Those waters were still lukewarm when they reached Laodicea (see Revelation 3:15–16). Jesus Christ, who is "the faithful and true witness" (Revelation 3:14), described Church members in Laodicea as lukewarm. Lukewarm Saints can be described as "not valiant in the testimony of Jesus" (D&C 76:79). **President Gordon B. Hinckley** (1910–2008) taught that since the Church is either true or it is false, one cannot logically adopt a "lukewarm" position toward it:
>
> "The book of Revelation declares: 'I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.
>
> "'So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth' (Revelation 3:15–16). ...
>
> "Each of us has to face the matter—either the Church is true, or it is a fraud. There is no middle ground. It is the Church and kingdom of God, or it is nothing" ("Loyalty," *Ensign* or *Liahona,* May 2003, 60).
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

These people believe that because they have obtained a sense of worldly success, they have need of nothing, or have adopted a position of apathy regarding the Church and its counsel. But the reality is that they know and have accomplished very little; they are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. Like the story of the Emperor's new clothes, these members, when tribulations start, will be the first exposed and the first to fall away, as when the sun comes out those with little to no root are quickly scorched, die, and wither away. A huge part or purpose for the desolating sickness, the vexation, is to wake up drunkard Ephraim (the "lukewarm"), because without that wake up call, there is a good chance that this entire group would have been lost.

After the Lord has woken you up, what counsel does he give you?

**Revelation 3**

**18** I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

What is the Lord suggesting you do in this verse with all of your perceived success, money, goods, etc.? The footnote provided gives you the answer.

**Matthew 13**

**44** Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

**45** Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:

**46** Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

**Doctrine and Covenants 6**

**6** Now, as you have asked, behold, I say unto you, keep my commandments, and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion;

**7** Seek not for riches but for wisdom, and behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you, and then shall you be made rich. Behold, he that hath eternal life is rich.

Get the "field," because there is treasure in it—treasure in temporal independence which has been always required by the Lord—and then start actually seeking after wisdom and the mysteries of God!

This should bring this into focus. The entire first three chapters of the Book of Revelation were written for the Saints to show them the tribulation that they would pass through, what was required at their hand, and the end goal; that of the redemption and building of New Jerusalem and obtaining an inheritance within her walls.

**Revelation 3**

**19** As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

**20** Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

**Revelation 3:20. "I Stand at the Door, and Knock"**

The imagery in Revelation 3:20 suggests that we are the ones who must open the door to the Savior. **President Thomas S. Monson** (1927–2018) encouraged members of the Church to open the door and allow the Savior into their lives:

"With all the strength of my soul I testify that our Heavenly Father loves each one of us. He hears the prayers of humble hearts; He hears our cries for help. … His Son, our Savior and Redeemer, speaks to each of us today: 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him' [Revelation 3:20].

"Will we listen for that knock? Will we hear that voice? Will we open that door to the Lord, that we may receive the help He is so ready to provide? I pray that we will" ("Mrs. Patton—the Story Continues," *Ensign* or *Liahona,* Nov. 2007, 24).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

It is crucial to understand—I repeat, it is crucial, Saints of God, to understand what I am about to say. The Lord loveth whom he chasteneth. The reason why Christ stands on the outside of the door and is not let in to the grand majority of members' hearts and lives is because the call from the other side of the door, the voice that you should hear and recognize, is a voice of chastisement. Flowery, buttery, rainbows and butterflies and all manner of sophistries are the realms of men; the realm of the Lord is "yea and nay." There is a reason why almost every predominate atheist has daddy issues—it's the voice that repels them. The Lord, like any good father, wants you to improve. He wants you to get better. He wants you to break through your walls. Anybody who has accomplished anything worth anything knows that those things were not obtained, that growth did not occur, because of rainbows and butterflies and the sophistries of men; nay, they came from grit and character. Remember that the Holy Ghost purges, and when properly utilized it is eternally rewarding, but it is not and will not ever be a painless process.

**Elder Jeffrey R. Holland**

With apologies to Elder Neal A. Maxwell for daring to modify and enlarge something he once said, I too suggest that "one's life … cannot be both faith-filled and stress-free." It simply will not work "to glide naively through life," saying as we sip another glass of lemonade, "Lord, give me all thy choicest virtues, but be certain not to give me grief, nor sorrow, nor pain, nor opposition. Please do not let anyone dislike me or betray me, and above all, do not ever let me feel forsaken by Thee or those I love. In fact, Lord, be careful to keep me from all the experiences that made Thee divine. And then, when the rough sledding by everyone else is over, please let me come and dwell with Thee, where I can boast about how similar our strengths and our characters are as I float along on my cloud of comfortable Christianity."

My beloved brothers and sisters, Christianity is comforting, but it is often not comfortable. The path to holiness and happiness here and hereafter is a long and sometimes rocky one. It takes time and tenacity to walk it. But, of course, the reward for doing so is monumental. This truth is taught clearly and persuasively in the 32nd chapter of Alma in the Book of Mormon. There this great high priest teaches that if the word of God is planted in our hearts as a mere seed, and if we care enough to water, weed, nourish, and encourage it, it will *in the future* bear fruit "which is most precious, … sweet above all that is sweet," the consuming of which leads to a condition of no more thirst and no more hunger.

("Waiting on the Lord," General Conference, October 2020)

**Revelation 3**

**21** To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

**22** He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

**Revelation 3:21. "To Sit with Me in My Throne"**

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** explained … "Through [the Atonement of Jesus Christ], all who believe and obey the glorious gospel of God, all who are true and faithful and overcome the world, all who suffer for Christ and his word, all who are chastened and scourged in the Cause of him whose we are—all shall become as their Maker and sit with him on his throne and reign with him forever in everlasting glory" ("The Purifying Power of Gethsemane," *Ensign,* May 1985, 9).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

Sitting with the Lord on His throne means receiving the blessings of exaltation, more specifically for us, in the New Jerusalem.

My prayer is that the Saints recognize the tribulation ahead and the promised blessings that can be theirs and will be theirs if (and only if) they ***overcome.***

God bless, God speed, keep the faith, ***and overcome!***

# Revelation 4–5

## Revelation Chapter 4

**Revelation 4**

**1** After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, ***and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.***

Continuing the theme from last chapter:

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> The things which John saw ***had no allusion*** to the scenes of the days of Adam, Enoch, Abraham or Jesus... ***John saw that only which was lying in futurity and which was shortly to come to pass.*** ... [These] revelations do not give us to understand anything of the past in relation to the kingdom of God.
>
> ("John's Vision of Futurity," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 289–290)

There are those who, after reading this quote from Joseph Smith and after reading Revelation 4:1 ***("things which must be hereafter")***, place the rest of chapter 4 and all of chapter 5 in the pre-earth life. Can somebody explain to me how one can believe Joseph Smith was a prophet of God and that chapters 4 and 5 deal with the pre-earth life? Joseph not only says it outright, we also have Joseph Smith Translations of verses in the Book of Revelation (so obviously Joseph Smith went through it). Therefore, John himself is testifying that what he is writing were things dealing with John's present time or future from John's time—these were the things that the voice, the angels, etc. are showing John. They aren't making it a secret.

**Revelation 4**

**2** And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

**3** And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

It will become more apparent as we continue that this is actually the throne of God, and this is the Father sitting on the throne. It is also worth noting that there are not a lot of similarities between John's book of Revelation and the words of other prophets, so the few that are similar are worth comparing. Of those prophets, none wrote as similarly as Ezekiel. Interestingly enough, there are promised to be two prophets that will preach and testify in Jerusalem for 3.5 years in Revelation. Both John and Ezekiel saw similar things, were promised similar things, and both ate a scroll that was "sweet in their mouths and bitter in their bellies" (we will get to that further in Understanding Revelation). We don't know the fate of Ezekiel, but we know that John became a translated being.

**Ezekiel 1**

> **26** ¶ And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.
>
> **27** And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of afire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.
>
> **28** As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.

**(26-11) Ezekiel 1:26–28. Ezekiel Saw God upon His Throne**

> Ezekiel saw a firmament, or expanse, above or over the creatures. Above the firmament Ezekiel saw God sitting on His throne in His glory. Ezekiel used several terms to describe the brilliance, beauty, and glory of God. Then, as a humble witness to such glory, beauty, and majesty, he fell upon his face in awe and reverent submission. (Compare Isaiah 6:1–5; Revelation 1:10–18; D&C 76:19–23; 110:1–4. ***Note especially the parallels between Ezekiel's language and John's in Revelation 4:2–11.***)
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition), 2003, p. 267)

**President Ezra Taft Benson**

> President David O. McKay tells of a singular event that happened to him. After falling asleep, he said he "beheld in vision something infinitely sublime." He saw a beautiful city, a great concourse of people dressed in white, and the Savior.
>
> "The city, I understood, was his. It was the City Eternal; and the people following him were to abide there in peace and eternal happiness.
>
> "But who were they?
>
> "As if the Savior read my thoughts, he answered by pointing to a semicircle that then appeared above them, and on which were written in gold the words:
>
> *"These Are They Who Have Overcome the World—Who Have Truly Been Born Again!*
>
> "When I awoke, it was breaking day." (*Cherished Experiences from the Writings of President David O. McKay,* comp. Clare Middlemiss, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976, pp. 59–60.)
>
> When we awake and are born of God, a new day will break and Zion will be redeemed.
>
> ("Born of God," General Conference, October 1985)

The themes of redemption, Zion, those who overcome, bows, gems, gold, etc. will come up time and time again. These are the themes of the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem, which tie into this chapter of Revelation heavily.

**Revelation 4**

**4** And in the midst of the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

**5** And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven servants of God.

The following commentary is taken from the Old Testament student manual dealing with what Ezekiel saw, but due to the similarities, the following is useful when exploring what John saw.

**(26-3) Ezekiel 1:1, 4–28. Ezekiel's Record of His Vision**

It is very difficult, if not impossible, for a mortal to convey in writing the message and spirit of a vision or other revelation from God so that the reader will have a complete understanding of what took place and what was communicated. Such was the challenge of Ezekiel in describing his transcendent visions of heaven. Others, too, have faced the same challenge (see 2 Corinthians 12:4; 3 Nephi 28:12–14; D&C 76:114–17). Joseph Smith said that "could you gaze into heaven five minutes, you would know more than you would by reading all that ever was written on the subject" (*History of the Church,* 6:50). One must experience revelation to understand it fully.

Those, including Ezekiel, who have had visitations or visions from the eternal worlds have often used symbolism, metaphor, simile, comparisons, and other kinds of figurative language to try to convey the experience they had and the message they received (see D&C 110:2–3; JS–H 1:32; Daniel 10:5–9; Revelation 1:12–18; 12:1–6). Therefore, everything Ezekiel said need not be taken literally, for he used many figurative expressions to try to tell that which was far beyond mortal experience. Many times, for example, he used words like *as, likeness,* and *appearance* (see Ezekiel 1:4–5, 7, 10, 13–14, 16, 24, 26–28).

Another difficulty in understanding Ezekiel and other Old Testament writers is the cultural differences between the Jews of Ezekiel's day and the modern reader. Where it is important, Notes and Commentary on the book of Ezekiel explain the cultural aspects of Ezekiel's writing.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed.), 2003, p. 265)

**(26-4) Ezekiel 1:4. "Whirlwind"**

The words *wind, tempest,* or *storm* would better fit the meaning intended in Ezekiel 1:4. A wind that revolves on its own axis with great rapidity is not what is meant by the Hebrew word translated "whirlwind"; rather, the idea of a furious or powerful wind is what was intended (see Merrill F. Unger, *Unger's Bible Dictionary,* s.v. "whirlwind"). The metaphor signifies the power of God. For instance, the power of God's presence was indicated to Job through allusion to a whirlwind (see Job 38:1). When the Lord poured out His Spirit with great power at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple in this dispensation, "a noise was heard like the sound of a rushing mighty wind, which filled the Temple" (*History of the Church,* 2:428).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition), 2003, pp. 265–266)

**(26-5) Ezekiel 1:4, 13. Cloud, Fire, Brightness, Color of Amber, Lamps, Lightning**

These figures are used throughout the scriptures in association with the glory, power, and majesty of God's presence or that of His messengers. (See "cloud" and "fire" in Exodus 13:21–22; 16:10; 19:9–16; 24:16; Leviticus 16:2; Matthew 17:5; D&C 34:7. See "fire," "brightness," "colour of amber," "lamps," and "lightning" in Exodus 3:2; Hebrews 12:29; 1 Nephi 1:6; D&C 29:12; 110:2–3; 133:41; Habakkuk 3:3–4; Acts 26:13; 2 Thessalonians 2:8; JS—H 1:16–17, 30–32; Daniel 10:6.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third ed.), 2003, p. 267)

**Doctrine and Covenants 77**

**5** Q. What are we to understand by the four and twenty elders, spoken of by John?

A. We are to understand that these elders whom John saw, were elders who had been faithful in the work of the ministry and were dead; who belonged to the seven churches, and were then in the paradise of God.

It is important to note this verse, once again, for a time frame. Those in the vision *had* been faithful and were dead, who *belonged* to the seven churches and were *then* in the ***paradise of God.*** So once again, this is ***not*** a reference to the pre-earth life and is ***not*** a reference to the winding up scene. It is also important to bring up "lightnings and thunderings and voices"—these will also crop up in the prophetic picture directly before the same events—namely the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem.

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

**87** For not many days hence and the earth shall tremble and reel to and fro as a drunken man; and the sun shall hide his face, and shall refuse to give light; and the moon shall be bathed in blood; and the stars shall become exceedingly angry, and shall cast themselves down as a fig that falleth from off a fig tree.

**88** And after your testimony cometh wrath and indignation upon the people.

**89** For after your testimony cometh the testimony of earthquakes, that shall cause groanings in the midst of her, and men shall fall upon the ground and shall not be able to stand.

**90** And also cometh the testimony of the ***voice*** of thunderings, and the ***voice*** of lightnings, and the voice of tempests, and the ***voice*** of the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds.

**91** And all things shall be in commotion; and surely, men's hearts shall fail them; for fear shall come upon all people.

**92** And angels shall fly through the midst of heaven, crying with a loud voice, sounding the trump of God, saying: Prepare ye, prepare ye, O inhabitants of the earth; ***for the judgment of our God is come. Behold, and lo, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.***

**Revelation 4**

**6** And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: …

We learn in **D&C 77:1**:

**1** Q. What is the sea of glass spoken of by John, 4th chapter, and 6th verse of the Revelation?

A. It is the earth, in its sanctified, immortal, and eternal state.

If you were to look at this specific verse and say that this specific sea of glass was the earth we are now standing on, you would by virtue be saying that the vision took place after the Celestialization of the earth, which doesn't occur until after the Great and Dreadful Day. As we continue to go through Revelation, we will see how that can't be right. So what is John seeing here? Much like with Zion, a New Jerusalem, and a city of Holiness, one must understand that we are in fact talking about three different things: (1) a New Jerusalem that will be built in America, (2) a city of Holiness coming from heaven that will join with the New Jerusalem below, (3) any city that has reached the holiness to be classified as a Zion of our God. Likewise, we know:

**Doctrine and Covenants 130**

**6** The angels do not reside on a planet like this earth;

**7** But they reside in the presence of God, on a globe like a sea of glass and fire, where all things for their glory are manifest, past, present, and future, and are continually before the Lord.

**8** The place where God resides is a great Urim and Thummim.

**9** This earth, in its sanctified and immortal state, will be made like unto crystal and will be a Urim and Thummim to the inhabitants who dwell thereon, whereby all things pertaining to an inferior kingdom, or all kingdoms of a lower order, will be manifest to those who dwell on it; and this earth will be Christ's.

So we learn here that ***any*** globe infused with the glory of God (and we know the glory of God is intelligence: Doctrine and Covenants 93: 36) becomes "as a sea of glass" and a "Urim and Thummim." Our Father in Heaven's throne is on ***one such.*** But *is* the Father's throne, or *will* the Father's throne, ever be on ***this earth?*** No. Because this earth will be ***Jesus' throne*** as it is rolled back into the presence of the Father. We learn from

the previous verse that the vison took place "in the paradise of God," so what we are looking at is God on ***His*** throne, in ***His*** paradise, and if you want to try to understand what that is like, it is what the earth will turn into once it is celestialized.

To further cement and prove this idea, the New Testament Student Manual reads:

**Revelation 4:4. "Four and Twenty Elders Sitting"**

> In Revelation 4, John saw a vision of God the Father sitting ***on His heavenly throne,*** with 24 elders surrounding the throne. Modern scripture explains that these 24 elders were "elders who had been faithful in the work of the ministry and were dead; who belonged to the seven churches, and were then in the paradise of God" (D&C 77:5). This vision confirms the promises made to those who overcome evil as recorded in Revelation 2–3.
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

**Revelation 4**

**6** … and in the midst of the throne were the four and twenty elders; and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

**7** And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.

**8** And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

**9** And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,

**10** The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

**11** Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Once again, what we can learn in Ezekiel will help us to understand some things being said here.

**(26-6) Ezekiel 1:5–6, 10. Four Creatures with Four Faces**

> In his vision, Ezekiel saw four creatures, each of which had four faces. "They four had the face of a man, … a lion, … an ox … [and] the face of an eagle" (Ezekiel 1:10). The Apostle John had a similar vision. In his vision, the creatures were described as being "like a lion, … like a calf, … [having] a face as a man, and … like a flying eagle" (Revelation 4:7). The Prophet Joseph explained that the four beasts in John's vision were representative of classes of beings (see D&C 77:3). The faces of the creatures in Ezekiel's vision seem to represent the same thing. The following interpretation, from an ancient Jewish commentary, is in harmony with that view: "Man is exalted among creatures; the eagle is exalted among birds; the ox is exalted among domestic animals; the lion is exalted among wild beasts; and all of them have received dominion, and greatness has been given them, yet they are stationed below the chariot of the Holy One" (*Midrash Shemoth Rabbah* 23; in D. Guthrie and J. A. Motyer, eds., *The New Bible Commentary: Revised,* p. 667).
>
> Ezekiel saw that the throne of God was above the creatures (Ezekiel 1:26–28). That placement represents His having dominion over all living things, though He provides the means for all His creations, both human and animal, to enter into eternal glory, each in their appropriate order (see D&C 77:2–3).
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (3rd ed.), 2003, p. 266)

**Ezekiel 1**

**9** Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward.

**10** As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle.

**11** Thus were their faces: and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies.

**Doctrine and Covenants 77**

**2** Q. What are we to understand by the four beasts, spoken of in the same verse?

A. They are figurative expressions, used by the Revelator, John, in describing heaven, the paradise of God, the happiness of man, and of beasts, and of creeping things, and of the fowls of the air; that which is spiritual being in the likeness of that which is temporal; and that which is temporal in the likeness of that which is spiritual; the spirit of man in the likeness of his person, as also the spirit of the beast, and every other creature which God has created.

**3** Q. Are the four beasts limited to individual beasts, or do they represent classes or orders?

A. They are limited to four individual beasts, which were shown to John, to represent the glory of the classes of beings in their destined order or sphere of creation, in the enjoyment of their eternal felicity.

**4** Q. What are we to understand by the eyes and wings, which the beasts had?

A. Their eyes are a representation of light and knowledge, that is, they are full of knowledge; and their wings are a representation of power, to move, to act, etc.

Joseph Smith further explained the difference between the beasts that John saw and the images that Old Testament prophets saw:

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Exceptions to Bible Translations
>
> The prophets do not declare that they saw a beast or beasts, but that they saw the *image* or *figure* of a beast. [They] did not see an actual bear or a lion, but the images or figures of those beasts. The translation should have been rendered "image" instead of "beast," in every instance where beasts are mentioned by the prophets. But John saw the actual beast in heaven, showing to John that beasts did actually exist there, and not to represent figures of things on the earth. When the prophets speak of seeing beasts in their visions, they mean that they saw the images, they being types to represent certain things….
>
> John saw curious looking beasts in heaven; he saw every creature that was in heaven,—all the beasts, fowls and fish in heaven,—actually there, giving glory to God. How do you prove it? (See Rev. 5:13.) "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 290–291)

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> Varied Creatures in Heaven
>
> I suppose John saw beings there of a thousand forms, that had been saved from ten thousand times ten thousand earths like this,—strange beasts of which we have no conception: all might be seen in heaven. The grand secret was to show John what there was in heaven. John learned that God glorified Himself by saving all that His hands had

made, whether beasts, fowls, fishes or men; and He will glorify Himself with them.

Says one, "I cannot believe in the salvation of beasts." Any man who would tell you that this could not be, would tell you that the revelations are not true. John heard the words of the beasts giving glory to God, and understood them. God who made the beasts could understand every language spoken by them. The four beasts were four of the most noble animals that had filled the measure of their creation, and had been saved from other worlds, because they were perfect: they were like angels in their sphere. We are not told where they came from, and I do not know; but they were seen and heard by John praising and glorifying God.

The popular religionists of the day tell us, forsooth, that the beasts spoken of in the Revelation represent kingdoms. Very well, on the same principle we can say that the twenty-four elders spoken of represent beasts; for they are all spoken of at the same time, and are represented as all uniting in the same acts of praise and devotion.

This learned interpretation is all as flat as a pancake! "What do you use such vulgar expressions for, being a prophet?" Because the old women understand it—they make pancakes. Deacon Homespun said the earth was flat as a pancake, and ridiculed the science which proved to the contrary. The whole argument is flat, and I don't know of anything better to represent it. The world is full of technicalities and misrepresentation, which I calculate to overthrow, and speak of things as they actually exist.

Again, there is no revelation to prove that things do not exist in heaven as I have set forth, nor yet to show that the beasts meant anything but beasts; and we never can comprehend the things of God and of heaven, but by revelation. We may spiritualize and express opinions to all eternity; but that is no authority.

(*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 291–292)

By this we are to learn that the throne of God was above all creatures, but He does provide the means for all of His creations, both human and animal, to enter into eternal glory, each in their appropriate order. This should bring peace and comfort to those with a love of animals that have since passed—a very comforting doctrine indeed!

## Revelation Chapter 5

**Revelation 5**

**1** And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

Explanations of the book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals will be given at the end of this chapter. For now, let's just try and get some general understanding and points of reference.

**Revelation 5**

**2** And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

**3** And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

**4** And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

**5** And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, ***hath*** prevailed ***to*** open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

**6** And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, ***stood*** a Lamb as it ***had been slain,*** having twelve horns and twelve eyes, which are the twelve servants of God sent forth into all the earth.

**Revelation 5:5. Lion of Judah and Root of David**

The One worthy to open the book with seven seals was called "the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David." Both of these phrases are titles of Jesus Christ. "Lion of the tribe of Juda" is a fitting title because a lion is majestic and powerful and because the Savior was born through the lineage of Judah (see Genesis 49:8–10; Matthew 1:3; Hebrews 7:14). The title Lion of Judah is a stark contrast to the meek and sacrificial "Lamb" mentioned in verse 6. These two images convey that Christ possesses both majesty and meekness.

Jesus is also called the "Root of David." The Gospel writers frequently emphasized that Jesus was a descendant of King David (see Matthew 1:1; Mark 10:47; Luke 1:32; John 7:42). Later in John's revelation, Christ Himself declared, "I am the root and the offspring of David" (Revelation 22:16). A root provides lifesaving water and nourishment to a plant—such was the mission of Jesus Christ to all who accept Him as their Savior and Redeemer (see John 15:1–8; see also Isaiah 11:1; 53:2).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

**Revelation 5:6–12. "Worthy Is the Lamb"**

A central message of Revelation 5 is that Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, is the only One worthy to fulfill the work of God, which is represented by the book sealed with seven seals (see verses 1–4, 9, 12–13). Revelation 5 depicts several groups worshipping Christ, declaring His worthiness in song (see verses 8–14). For further explanation of Jesus Christ's worthiness, see the commentaries for John 5:22, 27, 30 and for Hebrews 7:26.

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

**Revelation 5:6–14. The Lamb of God**

Lamb of God is a title of Jesus Christ. The Lamb that John saw bore the marks of one who ***"had been slain"*** (Revelation 5:6), evoking images of Christ's sacrificial death by crucifixion (see Isaiah 53:7; 1 Peter 1:18–19; Revelation 13:8). The book of Revelation refers to Christ as a "Lamb" nearly 30 times. **Elder Jeffrey R. Holland** of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained the significance of this name-title: "From Adam to the atonement of Christ, men were commanded to offer the firstlings of their flocks, that purest lamb without spot or blemish, as a similitude of the sacrifice that God the Father would make of his Firstborn, his Only Begotten Son who lived with perfection in the midst of imperfection" ("Whom Say Ye That I Am?" *Ensign,* Sept. 1974, 9).

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

**Revelation 5:6. "Seven Horns and Seven Eyes"**

John described the Lamb in his vision as having many horns and eyes. In the scriptures, horns are often a symbol of power (see 1 Samuel 2:10; Psalm 75:10). Eyes often symbolize light and knowledge (see D&C 77:4). The Joseph Smith Translation of Revelation 5:6 indicates that the Lamb had "*twelve* horns and *twelve* eyes, which are the *twelve servants* of God" (in Revelation 5:6, footnote b). Since the Lord's people in ancient Israel were numbered as twelve tribes and the Lord organized His Church with Twelve Apostles, the number twelve can symbolize divine government and organization, or the priesthood. This verse may suggest that all priesthood power and knowledge is centered in the Lamb of God.

(*New Testament Student Manual,* 2018)

The Lamb of God is Jesus. He did not fulfill the Atonement until 33 AD, and in these verses it is made clear that he had been slain, ***past tense.*** Once again confirming when the events in this vision are taking place.

Another interesting note is that when Jesus came the first time he came as a lamb; when Jesus comes the next time it will be as a lion, and during the Millennium the lion will lay down next to the lamb.

It is made clear in the JST that the crown is twelve—this could refer to completeness (the twelve tribes, etc.) as listed above, but more than anything it represents the twelve apostles, which will become more clear as we go over the seals and Revelation Chapter 12.

**Revelation 5**

**7** And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

This is when the Savior ***gets the book, gets the scroll*** with the seals. Because of this ***we know*** that the first seal ***was not opened until after 33AD because Christ did not obtain the book until after 33AD*** (after the Atonement).

Think about that moment for a second. The Savior being crucified and resurrected, appearing to Mary—"Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren (the twelve), and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God" (John 20: 17). The Son, the Lion of Judah, enters the presence of his Father triumphantly—"Thy will was done Father," and the Father hands him the book, the scroll that contains the hidden mysteries, economies, etc. of this world, the world that Christ ***will celestialize,*** the world that ***will be Christ's throne.*** The only thing left for the Savior to do is ***to finish the world and present it completed, perfected,*** etc. to the Father, ***and this is the scope for the remainder of the Book of Revelation!***

The Lord has the book, the scroll, and now He is in the process of creating a people that will be kings so that He will have a kingdom to be King of kings over. The earth and the Saints of God will be purified by He who will sit as a refiner of men, and He will make all things ready and presentable to the Father so that the earth, as a celestial orb containing all of the Lord's creations in it, can be rolled back into the presence of the Father, a permanent abode.

Now, can you see the magnitude, the pomp and circumstance, the grandeur, etc. of what just took place?! This is the Lord's graduation party; this is the Lord "getting the deed to his home," etc. Now it's time for the Savior to move in and decide who is going to live with Him.

Now that you understand that, you will understand the rest of this chapter. The singing, the dancing, the confetti, etc.—that is what we are seeing here but on a heavenly scale.

**Revelation 5**

**8** And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

**9** And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou ***wast slain,*** and ***hast redeemed us to God by thy blood*** out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

**10** And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and ***we shall*** reign on the earth.

**11** And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

**12** Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that ***was slain*** to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

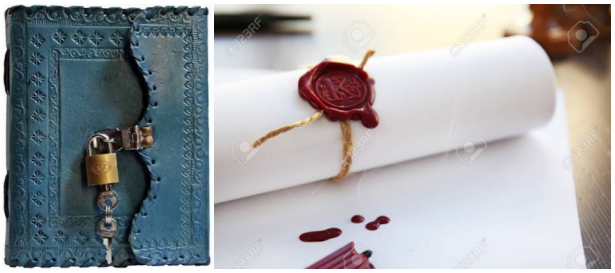
**13** And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

**14** And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

## Understanding the Seals

Understanding this first key of insight gives us a second key of insight, namely, when a seal was opened John was not shown ***the contents of the scroll*** but rather ***events that transpired on earth around the opening of that seal,*** so that what John is shown as the seals are opened ***is the chronology of events in the last days leading up to the final seventh seal being opened and the ushering in of the Millennium and God's Kingdom.***

Picture the scrolls as seven books and each book has a lock on the front, like a journal that has a lock; this is a good modern-day comparison to what John actually saw:



Now picture seven of these side by side:

So John sees a seal broken (that would be like somebody sticking the key in the journal's lock and then unlocking it), ***but the book doesn't actually open and the book is never read.*** John sees a seal is broken, is told to look elsewhere, and is shown events—but once again, the book/scroll itself ***is never opened*** and the book ***is never read.***

## Contents vs. Vision

What John was shown by the angel in vision vs what is actually contained inside the books/scrolls.

**D&C 77**

> **6** Q. What are we to understand ***by the book*** which John saw, which was sealed on the back with seven seals?
>
> A. We are to understand that ***it*** contains the revealed will, mysteries, and the works of God; the hidden things of his economy concerning this ***earth during the seven thousand years of its continuance, or its temporal existence.***

> **7** Q. What are we to understand ***by the seven seals*** with which it was sealed?
>
> A. We are to understand that the first ***seal contains*** the things of the first thousand years, and the second also of the second thousand years, and so on until the seventh.

We learn very clearly in Doctrine and Covenants 88 ***when*** the contents of the scrolls ***are actually revealed and read.*** In the subheading for verses 86–94 it explains "Signs, upheavals of the elements, and angels prepare the way for the coming of the Lord." We learn in those verses of the sign of the Son of Man appearing in the sky, the seventh seal being opened, and there being silence in heaven for about the space of half an hour. Directly after that, the next verses go over the judgments that are poured out on the world after the anointing, the resurrection of the just, etc. Then we read in verses 108–110:

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

> **108** And then shall the first angel again sound his trump in the ears of all living, ***and reveal the secret acts of men, and the mighty works of God in the first thousand years.***
>
> **109** And then shall the second angel sound his trump, ***and reveal the secret acts of men, and the thoughts and intents of their hearts, and the mighty works of God in the second thousand years***—
>
> **110** ***And so on, until the seventh angel shall sound his trump;*** and he shall stand forth upon the land and upon the sea, and swear in the name of him who sitteth upon the throne, that there shall be time no longer; and Satan shall be bound, that old serpent, who is called the devil, and shall not be loosed for the space of a thousand years.

We learn that ***the contents*** of these scrolls, these books, contain the secret acts, works, etc. of everyone born during each thousand years of Earth's temporal history. We know "that out of the books that shall be written shall men be judged" (3 Nephi 27: 26). We just learned, studying Revelation, that no man could open and reveal these books, no man could make final judgment, because no one was found worthy. ***The Savior alone*** gained the power to open these books, reveal the contents, and to execute righteous judgment—John was not worthy to look upon the book or reveal the contents of it.

When John sees a seal popped in heaven, he is in fact seeing heaven getting ready for the judgment. John is then shown what is transpiring parallel to that ***on the Earth.*** The books themselves, the seals, "contain" or preserve or keep locked up and secret the acts of each of the thousand years, but that is ***not*** what was shown or revealed to John when the seal was broken.

John was shown the seals being broken, but then his attention is brought away—he is told "come and look." John is then shown something—he did not read something; he was shown something. Once he is done being shown something, his eyes are brought back to the scroll, and the second seal is opened, etc., etc.

If you are sitting in a theatre with seven movie screens, and you are staring at a movie screen as the curtains part, and as you see them parting you say, "and I saw the curtains part!" would it make any logical sense for an angel to pop up beside you and immediately say, "come, come, see!"? Wouldn't that cause you to go, "where?" and move your eyes ***away*** from the screen? What would be the angel's response to that? Would he say, "umm, where you were just looking! At the movie screen!"

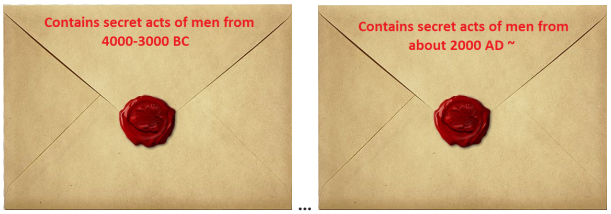
Does that make sense? God forbid…

The messengers were drawing John's attention ***away*** from the seal that had just been broken to show him ***something else.*** Not only is this the case once, but this happens ***every single time*** (because it happens for every scroll). John says "and I looked," meaning he drew his attention away from the scroll to what the angel was showing him—not that he ***continued to watch*** the same thing.

**I.e., Contents of the scrolls/books vs. the visions being shown**

Another way you can visualize this is as envelopes. The first envelope would contain in it the information from the years 4000–3000 BC, but the envelope was not opened until post 33 AD (post atonement, post Jesus Christ ascending back to the Father).

First Envelope .....Seventh Envelope




Opened post 33 AD.....Opened post 33 AD

So the 7th sealed scroll, the 7th locked book, the 7th sealed envelope *does* contain in it the acts of men from about the year 2000–on, but that does not mean that it was opened at the year 2000.

## Invaluable Last-day Points of Reference

The reason why John is shown what is transpiring ***on Earth*** when the seal is broken, when the envelope is opened, when the journal lock is unlocked, etc., etc. (however you want to visualize it), is because without that we'd have no points of reference! That is why we are given them! If it wasn't for what John was shown directly after, all we would know is that the seals were opened sometime post 33 AD. There would be no way to narrow it down, and frankly the book itself would lose almost all of its value to us in the latter days.

We are to look at what John is shown as each of the seals from 1–7 is opened, and then we are to make a timeline using points of reference—knowing the points of reference will be fulfilled in the latter days. This enables us to know that if what John was shown when the 6th seal was opened has not happened on Earth, well, then the 7th seal must not and cannot have been opened in heaven yet.

**Brother Hyrum Andrus** explained it this way:

> "Let's just say a word or two of clarification that is very important at this point in relation to that book and its seals. Sometimes people get the idea that those seals are opened at the beginning of each thousand years. That's not true. They are all sealed, and they are all opened, not in the thousand years where the events transpire, but they are opened in the latter-days. They are opened in the latter-days…
>
> Some people maintain that these various figures associated with the opening of the seals represent actions and activities in the respective thousand year period, so that the white horse and he that sat upon the white horse with the bow represents something that took place between the fall of Adam and 1,000 years of the year of the world. And the red horse represents something that took place between 1,000 of the year of the world and the year 2,000, which would include the flood which took place somewhere around the year 1635 or so after Adam's fall. And so on down.
>
> …This, however, disregards the clarification given by the Prophet Joseph Smith—[so let] me give you… this… rather popular clarification—. Let me turn to [the prophet Joseph Smith's] statement, and let's see what he says about it. He's the person who called it the plainest book God ever caused to be written; he's the person who, like John the Revelator, saw what John saw. And, like the brother of Jared, saw what the brother of Jared saw. Hence, he just may be qualified to make a clarification that is meaningful.

> Here in the Teachings, page 290, he says this: "John saw beasts that had to do with things on the earth, but not in past ages. The beasts which John saw had to devour the inhabitants of the earth in days to come." Future from John. And then he quotes the book of Revelation: "And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw and beheld a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering, and to conquer."
>
> Now, is this in the first millennial period of this earth's temporal state? Or is it after John the Revelator's time, according to Joseph Smith? He makes it very clear, does he not?
>
> Then he goes on. "And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword." Then he says, "The book of Revelation is one of the plainest books God ever caused to be written." And that's where the statement comes in.
>
> So these things that happened when the seals were opened, when the first seal was opened and the white horse went forth, it has nothing directly to do with 1,000 years from Adam's fall to the first millennial period. It is that which is depicted when that seal is opened. The opening of the seals are made to reveal the sequence of events in the last days. I don't know whether you've picked that one up, but that's one of the best statements I've made all day long The opening of the seals are made to reveal the sequence of events in the last days.
>
> These seals are to be opened in the last days, and at the opening of each seal, there are certain prophetic events to take place."
>
> (Lecture 20: John's Revelation of the Last Days #1)

## Final Voice of Warning

In conclusion, and to address those teaching alternative teachings—I've already quoted from **Joseph Smith** clearly declaring that those things which John saw had ***no allusion*** to anything previous to John's time. Once again:

> The things which John saw had no allusion to the scenes of the days of Adam, Enoch, Abraham, or Jesus…John saw that only which was lying in futurity and which was shortly to come to pass. See Revelation 1:1–3, [this is the] key to the whole subject.
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 289)

I would echo the words of our prophet of this dispensation and say the Book of Revelation is one of the plainest books that God ever caused to be written once one applies the "key to the whole subject," which Joseph provided.

If you would like to continue to view the book of Revelation as a scatter plot of events that occur from Adam all the way to the celestialization of the earth, you are more than welcome to do so. However, it will be a confusing book to you, with many things that make zero sense, regardless of the amount of rationalization you do (for you are wrong). Such things as:

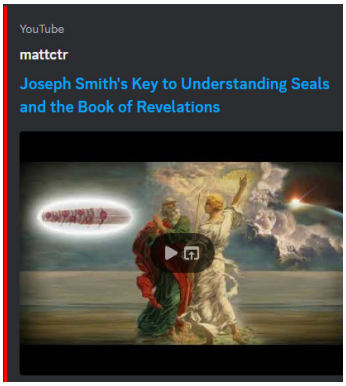
Why wasn't Adam shown in the first thousand years if that's what John was shown? Why wasn't Noah shown in the second thousand years if that's what John was shown? Why wasn't Abraham shown? Why wasn't Moses shown? Etc. Why wasn't ***the atonement of Jesus Christ,*** which was ***the most important event in the history of the world shown?***

If you view the book of Revelation as a scatter plot from Adam to the celestialization of the earth, there are found zero satisfactory answers to any of these questions—not one. How would you justify an all-important revelation that you view as having a scope from that of Adam to the celestialization of the earth ***not including any reference to the atonement made by the Savior of the world?*** Do you think that makes sense? Not only would that make it one of the most ***insignificant revelations of all time,*** it would make it ***one of the most blasphemous revelations of all time.*** If, however, you understand that the book of Revelation deals entirely with things of John's time period forward—more specifically dealing with the latter days (the days of the unveiling of the Lord and His kingdom)—and culminates with the Savior's second coming, it would make perfect sense why ***the atonement*** wasn't mentioned in the time period directly before the Lord's second coming.

I will always stick with the pyramid of truth, I will always stick with Jesus the Christ, Joseph Smith, and the Standard Works—and all three have spoken on this subject clearly enough that the most simple amongst us can understand! Yea, it is "the plainest book God has ever caused to be written," and cursed be those men or women who seek to remove the plain and precious keys of understanding!

## Other Visuals

There have been others who have done great videos, visuals, etc. going over this same subject. For many, this seems to be an extremely visual thing to comprehend, and, for each person, the visual that worked the best was different, so the more the merrier.

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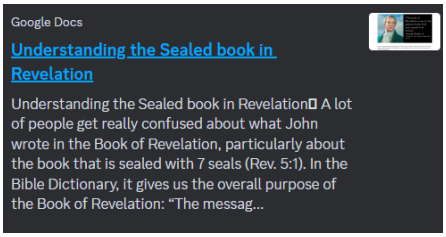
Google Docs
Understanding the Sealed book in Revelation
Understanding the Sealed book in Revelation A lot of people get really confused about what John wrote in the Book of Revelation, particularly about the book that is sealed with 7 seals (Rev. 5:1). In the Bible Dictionary, it gives us the overall purpose of the Book of Revelation: "The messag…

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1R4uOtABvSpbDc_xslZNeKRp-nfdXtuYtATLWfVa--ZPo/edit?usp=drivesdk

# Revelation 6–7

This is a chapter of The Macro Last-Day Timeline, so there obviously is assumed knowledge in each subsequent chapter. That said, there is an understanding that people will (even when handed a book) look in the index for what they want to have confirmed in their mind, skip ahead to that section, read the section, and if the section doesn't immediately conform to the needed confirmation bias, the person will close the work, saying "I have seen enough!" This book, these chapters, are also on video format on YouTube, so the added risk of people skipping directly to sections/videos that are "interesting to them," i.e., they are led by their itching ears, increases substantially.

I plead with you, if this is the case for you, stop reading this chapter, stop listening to this video, and start at the beginning—chapter one.

That said however, I know that people's confirmation bias of ignorance and delusion is so strong, and their ability to read so weak, that they will ignore the plea and keep reading. If that is the case, if this will become the only chapter that you are going to read, then you need hear what **Joseph Smith** himself taught regarding the Book of Revelation at least once in your life:

> The things which John saw had ***no allusion*** to the scenes of the days of Adam, Enoch, Abraham or Jesus. … ***John saw that only which was lying in futurity and which was shortly… to come to pass.*** See Revelation 1:1–3, which is a key to the whole subject… Now, I make this declaration that those things which John saw in heaven had no allusion to anything that had been on the earth previous to that time, because they were the representation of 'things which must shortly come to pass' and not of what has already transpired. … [These revelations] do not give us to understand anything of the past in relation to the kingdom of God.
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 289–290)

We will go over a great summary of this in Section 6 of The Macro Last-day Timeline, **Brother Andrus** + English, but it is so good I'd like to include it here as well in the introduction to this chapter.

> Now let's go back and see if we can pick up the picture on this. Some people maintain that these various figures associated with the opening of the seals represent actions and activities in the respective thousand year period, so that the white horse and he that sat upon the white horse with the bow represents something that took place between the fall of Adam and 1,000 years of the year of the world. And the red horse represents something that took place between 1,000 of the year of the world and the year 2,000, which would include the flood which took place somewhere around the year 1,635 or so after Adam's fall. And so on down. Let me give you, and this is a rather popular clarification—This, however, disregards the clarification given by the Prophet Joseph Smith. Let me turn to his statement, and let's see what he says about it. He's the person who called it the plainest book God ever caused to be written; he's the person who, like John the Revelator, saw what John saw. And, like the brother of Jared, saw what the brother of Jared saw. Hence, he just may be qualified to make a clarification that is meaningful. [Brother Andrus then reads the quote from Joseph Smith that I've already gone over above]… So these things that happened when the seals were opened, when the first seal was opened and the white horse went forth, it has nothing directly to do with 1,000 years from Adam's fall to the first millennial period. It is that which is depicted when that seal is opened. The opening of the seals are made to reveal the sequence of events in the last days. I don't know whether you've picked that one up, but that's one of the best statements I've made all day long. The opening of the seals are made to reveal the sequence of events in the last days.
>
> (Nephi and John's Revelations of the Last Days Part 1 The Book of Mormon Lecture 20, the video lecture has it at timestamp @26:31)

So what is Revelation chapters 6 and 7? It simply is a scatterplot of events that will occur in chronological order, given to us in scripture form. And what do we call this when it happens in prophecy? We call that a "point of reference chain," e.g., event one happens, then event two happens, then event three happens, etc., etc. This revelation was given after 33 AD, and Paul had this to say about the Second Coming:

**2 Thessalonians 2**

> **2** That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled by letter, except ye receive it from us; neither by spirit, nor by word as that the day of Christ is at hand
>
> **3** Let no man deceive you by any means: for there shall come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

Peter added to this by counseling:

**2 Peter 3**

> **3** Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,
>
> **4** And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.
>
> **5** For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:
>
> **6** Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:
>
> **7** But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.
>
> **8** But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

The early Saints' thinking was far too, in the words of President Nelson, myopic. The earth will rest on ***the seventh day.*** Peter knew that they were in around the ***four thousandth year*** of the earth's temporal history, or in other words, the fourth day. What these prophets were teaching was that the members of that time would obviously not live to see all these events; it was written for the latter-days, or sixth day.

That said, we still make similar mistakes today! We get so entrenched in wanting the Great and Dreadful Day to be tomorrow that we throw the prophecies of God over our shoulder and forget about ***all*** that the Lord has promised He will do for scattered Israel! We do this for many reasons: we might be aging and fear death, we might be getting tired of enduring, we might be fearful or unwilling to pass through tribulation, we might lack faith that the Lord will do what He said He would do when He said He would do it, we might not have prepared as we were commanded and thus live in a perpetual state of fear, or we could simply be ignorant to the scriptures, etc.

However, we learn clearly in the Lectures on Faith that if God did not obey law, He would cease to be God. God doesn't "do what He wants when He wants it"—if He did, He would cease to be God. When the Lord says He will do something, He does it.

**Abraham 3**

> **17** … there is nothing that the Lord thy God shall take in his heart to do but what he will do it.

We also learn in the Lectures on Faith that one cannot have faith in God sufficient unto life and salvation while harboring such falsehoods about the Lord. So we know, the promises of the Lord are sure!

**3 Nephi 29**

> **2** ***And ye may know that the words of the Lord, which have been spoken by the holy prophets, shall all be fulfilled; and ye need not say that the Lord delays his coming unto the children of Israel.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

> **26** And in that day shall be heard of wars and rumors of wars, and the whole earth shall be in commotion, and men's hearts shall fail them, ***and they shall say that Christ delayeth his coming until the end of the earth.***
>
> **27** And the love of men shall wax cold, and iniquity shall abound.

**Joseph Smith—Matthew 1**

> **51** But if that evil servant shall say in his heart: ***My lord delayeth his coming,***
>
> **52** And shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken

When people skip over the events of The Redemption of Zion, when people skip over the events of the building of New Jerusalem and the Lord appearing there, etc., etc., and they skip directly to false ideas of "the rapture" and the Lord appearing in Glory to the whole world, i.e., "the end of the earth," i.e., the Great and Dreadful Day, etc., they are in fact saying, "the Lord delayeth His coming… until the Great and Dreadful Day"! Those who skip over these events casually and say they don't need to happen are "eating and drinking with the drunk," and they are "drunk, but not with strong drink" (Isaiah 29:9).

## Revelation Chapter 6

**Revelation 6**

**1** And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, one of the four beasts, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

We have to firstly address the elephant in the room—the New Testament Student Manual for Revelation Chapter 6. Many are quick to point to this chapter in the Latter-day Saint student manuals and say, "See! Micah's understanding of last-day timelines is false! It goes against the student manual!" Well, let's address this elephant shall we?

1. The first thing we have to note is that the section most often pointed to here ***does not*** have a quote from the pyramid of truth, meaning it was written by somebody holding a calling similar to that of a Sunday School teacher, and they didn't reference it. Ergo, these statements hold no authority.
2. But for the sake of understanding, let us simply throw up our hands for a moment and say, "fine, we will give you that one!" (despite the facts). What does the student manual teach that goes against anything taught in The Macro Last-day Timeline?! The quote people should pay attention to in the student manual is as follows: "the following chart… offers ***possible*** interpretations"… Wow now! That seems concrete eh?! The following passages offers ***POSSIBLE*** interpretations?! Well, God forbid if we happen to go to Joseph Smith Jr. to obtain a few more ACTUAL interpretations eh?
3. And finally, the third thing we have to address is this: this is not a conflict between The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint's Student Manual and Micah—if such a conflict did actually exist, the conflict exists between The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Student Manual and Joseph Smith Jr. People need to accept and grasp that—and many do! They view Joseph Smith as only some "rough stone rolling kid who got most things wrong." Ok! Fine! At least you are being honest about it mates! I too am honest with the doctrine! Joseph Smith Jr. > Student Manuals from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints! That is "The Pyramid of Truth" (taken from Section Two: Zeal Without Knowledge).

With those three points understood, we all know where we stand and with whom we stand. I stand with the prophet Joseph Smith. If anyone (other than Christ Himself) contradicts what Joseph taught, that's not a conflict between me and the individual in question, that is a conflict between the individual in question and Joseph Smith Jr. himself. Doctrine does not change. We do not believe in abrogation or supersessionism—I can't stress that enough.

So let us go through these verses one at a time and make a point of reference chain.

**Back to Revelation 6**

**2** And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

The first point of reference is somebody on a white horse with a bow and a crown who went forth conquering and to conquer. I don't usually include pictures, but I found these two pictures online and I just had to include them. Once you see them you'll understand:

For some reason, the general Christian world has a better understanding of this point of reference than members of Christ's own church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, ***despite,*** or rather in some cases, ***in spite of,*** Joseph Smith giving us the key to understand these things!

1. The one riding the white horse is none other than the Lord Himself.
2. The fulfillment to these verses is, or takes place in, the latter days (tanks and guns).
3. The fulfillment of these verses is tied to the concept of "Redemption," i.e., "the Redemption of Zion."

The only thing we are missing is an understanding of "the crown" worn by the Lord, as well as the bow and arrow in his hand. Now that we have already gone over Section III: The Marvelous Work and Wonder, we understand that Joseph Smith Jr. is "the polished shaft," meaning he is the arrow in Christ's quiver, meaning Christ is holding a bow! The last thing to really bring into this mental image is the crown and the jewels in the crown, because the imagery of it is so beautiful.

**3 Nephi 24**

**16** Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

**17** And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, ***in that day when I make up my jewels;*** and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

**18** Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

**(34-14) Malachi 3:16–18. What Is the "Book of Remembrance"?**

Those who devote themselves to the Lord earn for themselves the privilege of having their names recorded in the Lamb's book of life. This sacred "book of remembrance" (v. 16) is kept in heaven and contains ***the names of the faithful children of Father in Heaven, or, in other words, those who are His precious jewels.*** (see D&C 128:6–7; Psalm 69:28; Revelation 3:5; 21:27.) They are those who will inherit eternal life, for this book contains "the names of the sanctified, even them of the celestial world" (D&C 88:2). Those whose names are written there and who afterwards return to sinful ways will have their names blotted from the book (see Revelation 13:8; 17:8; 22:19).

The book of life is the Lord's book of remembrance, not unlike records that He has commanded the Saints to keep in all ages of the world. **Elder McConkie** explained:

"Adam kept a written account of his faithful descendants in which he recorded their faith and works, their righteousness and devotion, their revelations and visions, and their adherence to the revealed plan of salvation. To signify the importance of honoring our worthy ancestors and of hearkening to the great truths revealed to them, Adam called his record a *book of remembrance*. It was prepared 'according to the pattern given by the finger of God.' (Moses 6:4–6, 46.)

"Similar records have been kept by the saints in all ages. (Mal. 3:16–17; 3 Ne. 24:15–16.) Many of our present scriptures have come down to us because they were first written by prophets who were following Adam's pattern of keeping a book of remembrance. The Church keeps similar records today (D. & C. 85) and urges its members to keep their own personal and family books of remembrance." (*Mormon Doctrine,* p. 100.)

(*Old Testament Institute Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 355)

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**3** Yet I will own them, and they shall be mine in that day ***when I shall come to make up my jewels.*** ...

**12** And in that day ***all who are found upon the watch-tower, or in other words, all mine Israel, shall be saved.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 60**

**2** But with some I am not well pleased, ***for they will not open their mouths,*** but they hide the talent which I have given unto them, because of the fear of man. Wo unto such, for mine anger is kindled against them.

**3** And it shall come to pass, if they are not more faithful unto me, it shall be taken away, even that which they have.

**4** For I, the Lord, rule in the heavens above, and among the armies of the earth; ***and in the day when I shall make up my jewels, all men shall know what it is that bespeaketh the power of God.***

**D&C 60:4. "I Shall Make Up My Jewels"**

In all ages jewels have been highly esteemed by man. As these precious stones are the best and most valued that the earth can produce, so are those people who prepare themselves by obedience to the commandments, for they will be the jewels the Savior will claim when He comes in glory (see Isaiah 62:3; Zechariah 9:16; Malachi 3:17; D&C 101:3).

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 130)

**Isaiah 62**

**1** For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.

**2** And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.

**3** ***Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.***

**4** Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Delightful, and thy land Union; for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.

**5** ¶ For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy God marry thee; and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.

**6** ***I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence,***

**7** ***And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.***

**8** The LORD hath sworn by ***his right hand, and by the arm of his strength,*** Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured:

**9** But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the LORD; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness.

**10** ¶ Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people.

**11** Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.

**12** And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.

**Zechariah 9**

*Zechariah speaks as the Messiah—The Messiah will come, having salvation, lowly and riding upon an ass—He will free the prisoners from the pit—Judah and Ephraim are instruments of the Lord.*

**9** ¶ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, ***and upon a colt*** the foal of an ass.

**10** And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.

**11** As for thee also, ***by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.***

**12** ¶ Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee;

**13** When I have bent Judah for me, ***filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man.***

**14** ***And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord GOD shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.***

**15** The LORD of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones; and they shall drink, and make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar.

**16** ***And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land.***

**17** For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.

**Back to Revelation 6**

**3** And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

**4** And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

The second point of reference now in our chain is "peace being taken from the earth," or in other words "war being poured out upon all flesh," or "every nation shall be at war one with another," etc. The student manual informs us that:

- Red horse = Bloodshed
- Sword = War and destruction

And then, once again, gives us "possible interpretations" that we will ignore.

**Back to Revelation 6**

**5** And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

**6** And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

The third point of reference is "famine," or as it says here "a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine." The student manual informs us that:

- Black horse = Famine
- Balances = High prices for food

"A measure of wheat" would feed an adult for a day and cost a penny under these famine conditions. "Penny" is translated from the Greek word dēnarion, which referred to a Roman coin that some estimate was worth the typical daily wage of a laborer. A person could purchase only enough food to live on with a whole day's wages, indicating extreme famine prices. In contrast, barley was less expensive and was thus eaten by the poor."

**Back to Revelation 6**

**7** And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

**8** And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with pestilence, and with the beasts of the earth.

The fourth point of reference is the pale horse, death and hell—pestilence and plague. The student manual informs us that:

- Pale horse = Death

The Expositor's Bible Commentary says this about the color of the fourth horse: "'Pale' ( chloros) denotes a yellowish green, the light green of a plant, or the paleness of a sick person in contrast to a healthy appearance." Put bluntly, this horse is the color of death.

Some translations of the Bible mention "plague" (e.g., the New International Version) or "pestilence" (e.g., the Revised Standard Version) in connection with the riders in the passage following the introduction of the fourth rider; cf. "They were given power over a fourth of the Earth to kill by sword, famine, ***plague,*** and by the wild beasts of the Earth." in the NASB.

**Back to Revelation 6**

**9** And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

**10** And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

**11** And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

The fifth point of reference:

Notable martyrs are asking ***when they can return.*** This helps us to better understand, once again, that this event hadn't taken place even in the 1800s, let alone before that time.

**Doctrine and Covenants 135**

**1** To seal the testimony of this book and the Book of Mormon, we announce the martyrdom of Joseph Smith the prophet, and Hyrum Smith the patriarch…

**Hymn #27: Praise to the Man**

2. Praise to his mem'ry, he died as a martyr;
   honored and blessed be his ever great name!
   ***Long shall his blood, which was shed by assassins,***
   ***plead unto heav'n*** while the earth lauds his fame.
4. Sacrifice brings forth the blessings of heaven;
   ***earth must atone for the blood of that man.***
   Wake up the world for the conflict of justice.
   Millions shall know "Brother Joseph" again.

**Doctrine and Covenants 137**

**7** They were innocent of any crime, as they had often been proved before, and were only confined in jail by the conspiracy of traitors and wicked men; and ***their innocent blood*** on the floor of Carthage jail is a broad seal affixed to "Mormonism" that cannot be rejected by any court on earth, and ***their innocent blood*** on the escutcheon of the State of Illinois, with the broken faith of the State as pledged by the governor, is a witness to the truth of the everlasting gospel that all the world cannot impeach; and ***their innocent blood*** on the banner of liberty, and on the magna charta of the United States, is an ambassador for the religion of Jesus Christ, that will touch the hearts of honest men among all

> nations; and ***their innocent blood, with the innocent blood of all the martyrs under the altar that John saw, will cry unto the Lord of Hosts till he avenges that blood on the earth. Amen.***

**Finishing Revelation 6**

**12** And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

**13** And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

**14** And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

**15** And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

**16** And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

**17** For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

We have lots of events taking place here, so let us list them off:

1. A great earthquake
2. Sun became black as sackcloth of hair
3. The moon became as blood
4. The stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.
5. The heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, i.e., "new heavens"
6. Every mountain and island were moved out of their places
7. Great fear falls upon the world

**So up to this point in time, what do we have for points of reference?**

1. The Lord riding a white horse with a bow and a crown, riding forth to conquer (i.e., "The Redemption of Zion")
2. War being poured out upon all people
3. Famine
4. Pestilence, plague, and death
5. A great earthquake
6. Sun became black as sackcloth of hair
7. The moon became as blood
8. The stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.
9. The heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, i.e., "new heavens"
10. Every mountain and island were moved out of their places
11. Great fear falls upon the world

Are these events of the past or are these points of reference for the future? Have these things taken place in the past or are these literally the things we are to look for? The Marvelous Work and Wonder?!

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

> **87** ***For not many days hence…***

So please note, these are events to take place in the future from Joseph Smith Jr.

> **87** … and the earth shall tremble and reel to and fro as a drunken man; and the sun shall hide his face, and shall refuse to give light; and the moon shall be bathed in blood; and the stars shall become exceedingly angry, and shall cast themselves down as a fig that falleth from off a fig tree.

These are events 6–9 above, word for word. Continuing we read:

> **88** And after your testimony cometh wrath and indignation upon the people.
>
> **89** For after your testimony cometh the testimony of earthquakes, that shall cause groanings in the midst of her, and men shall fall upon the ground and shall not be able to stand.
>
> **90** And also cometh the testimony of the voice of thunderings, and the voice of lightnings, and the voice of tempests, and the voice of the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds.
>
> **91** And all things shall be in commotion; and surely, men's hearts shall fail them; for fear shall come upon all people.

And these are points 10–11 above, almost word for word… And the Lord said these events were to take place in the future from Joseph Smith Jr., not in the past.

**Doctrine and Covenants 87**

> **4** And it shall come to pass, ***after many days,*** slaves shall rise up against their masters, who shall be marshaled and disciplined for war.
>
> **5** And it shall come to pass also that the remnants who are left of the land will marshal themselves (#1), and shall become exceedingly angry, and shall vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation.
>
> **6** And thus, with the sword and by bloodshed the inhabitants of the earth shall mourn (#2); and with famine (#3), and plague (#4), and earthquake (#6), and the thunder of heaven, and the fierce and vivid lightning also, shall the inhabitants of the earth be made to feel the wrath, and indignation, and chastening hand of an Almighty God, until the consumption decreed hath made a full end of all nations;
>
> **7** That the cry of the saints, and of the blood of the saints, shall cease to come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, from the earth, to be avenged of their enemies. (#5)

The Lord in Doctrine and Covenants 87 gives us the "Prophecy on War," as it is commonly called, dealing once again from Joseph Smith Jr. forward, and what are the points of reference?

1. The Redemption of Zion (i.e., "the remnants")
2. War poured out upon all nations
3. Famine
4. Plague
5. Blood of the Saints crying
6. Earthquake

Literally, once again, word for word the same exact points of reference we just went over in Revelation! But wait… there's more!

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> The editor, as well as some others, "thinks that Joe Smith has his match at last," because Mr. Redding thinks that ***he has seen the sign of the Son of Man.*** But I shall use my right, and declare that, notwithstanding Mr. Redding may have seen a wonderful appearance in the clouds one morning about sunrise (which is nothing very uncommon in the winter season) ***he has not seen the sign of the Son of Man,*** as foretold by Jesus; neither has any man, nor will any man, ***until after the sun shall have been darkened and the moon bathed in blood;*** for the Lord hath not shown me any such sign; and as the prophet saith, so it must be—"Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." (See Amos 3:7.) Therefore, hear this, O earth: ***The Lord will not come to reign over the righteous, in this world, in 1843, nor until everything for the Bridegroom is ready.***
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 280)

**Moses 7**

> **60** And the Lord said unto Enoch: As I live, even so will I come in the last days, in the days of wickedness and vengeance, to fulfil the oath which I have made unto you concerning the children of Noah;

**61** And the day shall come that the earth shall rest, but before that day ***the heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, but my people will I preserve;***

**62** ***And righteousness will I send down out of heaven;*** and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I ***cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.***

**63** And the Lord said unto Enoch: ***Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there,*** and we will receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other;

**64** And there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest.

**65** And it came to pass that Enoch saw the day of the coming of the Son of Man, in the last days, to dwell on the earth in righteousness for the space of a thousand years;

**66** ***But before that day he saw great tribulations among the wicked; and he also saw the sea, that it was troubled, and men's hearts failing them, looking forth with fear for the judgments of the Almighty God, which should come upon the wicked.***

**Joseph Smith—Matthew 1**

**4** And Jesus left them, and went upon the Mount of Olives. And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying: Tell us when shall these things be which thou hast said concerning the destruction of the temple, and the Jews; and what is the sign of thy coming, ***and of the end of the world, or the destruction of the wicked, which is the end of the world?***

**26** For as the light of the morning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, and covereth the whole earth, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.

**27** And now I show unto you a parable. ***Behold, wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together; so likewise shall mine elect be gathered from the four quarters of the earth.***

**28** And they shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars.

**29** ***Behold I speak for mine elect's sake; for nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.***

**30** And again, because iniquity shall abound, the love of men shall wax cold; but he that shall not be overcome, the same shall be saved.

**31** And again, this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come, or the destruction of the wicked;

**32** And again shall the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, be fulfilled.

**33** ***And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken.***

**36** And, as I said before, after the tribulation of those days, ***and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken, then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory;***

**37** And whoso treasureth up my word, shall not be deceived, for the Son of Man shall come, ***and he shall send his angels before him*** with the great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together the remainder of his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

**38** Now learn a parable of the fig tree—When its branches are yet tender, and it begins to put forth leaves, you know that summer is nigh at hand;

**39** So likewise, mine elect, when they shall see all these things, they shall know that he is near, even at the doors

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

**66** And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God;

**67** And the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion.

**68** And it shall come to pass among the wicked, ***that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety.***

**69** And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; ***and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another.***

**70** And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore we cannot stand.

**71** And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away ***before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country."***

("Zion and Jerusalem," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 17)

The same exact points of reference are gone over time and time again in these verses and quotes:

1. The Lord riding a white horse with a bow and a crown, riding forth to conquer (i.e., "The Redemption of Zion")
2. War being poured out upon all people
3. Famine
4. Pestilence, plague, and death
5. A great earthquake (which will move everything out of its place)
6. Sun became black as sackcloth of hair
7. The moon became as blood
8. The stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.
9. The heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, i.e., "new heavens"
10. Every mountain and island were moved out of their places
11. Great fear falls upon the world

If we don't understand this, then we will not understand the subsequent chapter.

## Revelation Chapter 7

**Revelation 7**

**1** And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

Now, this might confuse some people if we don't stop and identify what has happened. John is shown these same series of events that Enoch was shown in the same exact way and order, but then John, just like Enoch, is shown the exact same thing—how the Lord will preserve his people.

**Moses 7**

> **61** ***And the day shall come that the earth shall rest, but before that day the heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, but my people will I preserve;***
>
> **62** ***And righteousness will I send down out of heaven…***

So they are both shown those events, but then they are taken back, before the events transpire, and are shown how God's people will be preserved from the events that they were just shown—"great tribulations shall be (future) among the children of men, but my people will I preserve."

We have to understand this or we will incorrectly place the "preserving of God's people" ***after*** the terrible events, which doesn't make any sense, correct? So these events now being shown to John (and Enoch before) are the events between:

1. The Lord riding a white horse with a bow and a crown, riding forth to conquer (i.e., "The Redemption of Zion")

This is the Lord "preserving His people," and following we have:

2. War being poured out upon all people
3. Famine
4. Pestilence, plague, and death
5. A great earthquake (which will move everything out of its place)
6. Sun became black as sackcloth of hair
7. The moon became as blood
8. The stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.
9. The heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, i.e., "new heavens"
10. Every mountain and island were moved out of their places
11. Great fear falls upon the world

The tribulation of the day that the Lord's people are preserved from in the New Jerusalem!

**Back to Revelation 7**

**2** And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

**3** Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

So this angel being sent down out of heaven (i.e., "righteousness sent down from heaven") is sent down directly before great tribulations happen, tied to the Redemption of Zion, the preservation of the Lord's people.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> The Savior said ***when these tribulations should take place,*** it should be committed to a man who should be a witness over the whole world: the keys of knowledge, power and revelations should be revealed to a witness who should hold the testimony to the world. ***It has always been my province*** to dig up hidden mysteries—new things—for my hearers. ***Just at the time when some men think that I have no right to the keys of the Priesthood—just at that time I have the greatest right.*** The Germans are an exalted people. The old German translators are the most nearly correct—most honest of any of the translators; and therefore ***I get testimony to bear me out in the revelations that I have preached for the last fourteen years.*** The old German, Latin, Greek and Hebrew translations all say it is true: they cannot be impeached, and therefore ***I am in good company.***
>
> All the testimony is that the Lord in the last days would commit the keys of the Priesthood to a witness over all people.
>
> Has the Gospel of the kingdom commenced in the last days? And will God take it from ***the man*** until He takes him Himself? I have read it precisely as the words flowed from the lips of Jesus Christ. ***John the Revelator saw an angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth.***
>
> ***The scripture is ready to be fulfilled when great wars, famines, pestilence, great distress, judgments, &c., are ready to be poured out on the inhabitants of the earth. John saw the angel having the holy Priesthood, who should preach the everlasting Gospel to all nations. God had an angel—a special messenger—ordained and prepared for that purpose in the last days. Woe, woe be to that man or set of men who lift up their hands against God and His witness in these last days: for they shall deceive almost the very chosen ones!"***
>
> ("Interpretation of Scripture," *TPJS,* pp. 364–365)

This angel is sent down directly before the great wars, famines, pestilence, etc.—literally everything we have just gone over! And this angel's job is tied directly to the preservation of the Lord's people in the garner, the Redemption of Zion, the New Jerusalem!

**3 Nephi 21**

> **8** And when that day shall come, it shall come to pass that kings shall shut their mouths; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.
>
> **9** For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and a marvelous work among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them.
>
> **10** But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them. Yet I will heal him, for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.
>
> **11** Therefore it shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words, who am Jesus Christ, which the Father shall cause him to bring forth unto the Gentiles, and shall give unto him power that he shall bring them forth unto the Gentiles, (it shall be done even as Moses said) they shall be cut off from among my people who are of the covenant.
>
> **12** And my people who are a remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, yea, in the midst of them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he go through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.
>
> **13** Their hand shall be lifted up upon their adversaries, and all their enemies shall be cut off.
>
> **14** Yea, wo be unto the Gentiles except they repent; for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Father, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots;
>
> **15** And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strongholds;
>
> **16** And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thy land, and thou shalt have no more soothsayers;
>
> **17** Thy graven images I will also cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee, and thou shalt no more worship the works of thy hands;
>
> **18** And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee; so will I destroy thy cities.

**19** And it shall come to pass that all lyings, and deceivings, and envyings, and strifes, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, shall be done away.

**20** For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel;

**21** And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard.

**22** But if they will repent and hearken unto my words, and harden not their hearts, I will establish my church among them, and they shall come in unto the covenant and be numbered among this the remnant of Jacob, unto whom I have given this land for their inheritance;

**23** And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.

**24** And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in, who are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem.

**25** And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst.

**26** And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. ***Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, yea, even the tribes which have been lost, which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem.***

**27** Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, with the Father to prepare the way whereby they may come unto me, that they may call on the Father in my name.

**28** Yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father among all nations in preparing the way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance.

**29** And they shall go out from all nations; and they shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight, for I will go before them, saith the Father, and I will be their rearward.

**D&C 77:9. What is the Significance of the Angel from the East Sealing the Servants of God?**

The four angels who are given power over the earth are kept from sending forth desolations upon the earth until God's servants are sealed in their foreheads. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that this sealing "signifies sealing the blessing upon their heads, meaning the everlasting covenant, thereby making their calling and election sure" (*Teachings,* p.321)

**Elder Orson Pratt** gave this additional explanation:

"When the Temple is built [in the New Jerusalem] the sons of the two Priesthoods...will enter into that Temple in this generation...and all of them who are pure in heart will behold the face of the Lord and that too before he comes in his glory in the clouds of heaven, for he will suddenly come to his Temple, and he will purify the sons of Moses and of Aaron, until they shall be prepared to offer in that Temple an offering that shall be acceptable in the sight of the Lord. In doing this, he will purify not only the minds of the Priesthood in that Temple, but he will purify their bodies until they shall be quickened, renewed and strengthened, and they will be partially changed, not to immortality, but changed in part that they can be filled with the power of God, and they can stand in the presence of Jesus, and behold his face in the midst of that Temple. This will prepare them for further ministrations among the nations of the earth, it will prepare them to go forth in the days of tribulation and vengeance upon the nations of the wicked, when God will smite them with pestilence, plague and earthquake, such as former generations never knew. Then the servants of God will need to be armed with the power of God, they will need to have that sealing blessing pronounced upon their foreheads that they can stand forth in the midst of these desolations and plagues and not be overcome by them. When John the Revelator describes this scene he says he saw four angels sent forth, ready to hold the four winds that should blow from the four quarters of heaven. Another angel ascended from the east and cried to the four angels, and said, "Smite not the earth now, but wait a little while." "How long?" "Until the servants of our God are sealed in their foreheads." What for? To prepare them to stand forth in the midst of these desolations and plagues, and not be overcome. When they are prepared, when they have received a renewal of their bodies in the Lord's Temple, and have been filled with the Holy Ghost and purified as gold and silver in a furnace of fire, then they will be prepared to stand before the nations of the earth and preach glad tidings of salvation in the midst of judgments that are to come like a whirlwind upon the wicked." (In *Journal of Discourses,* 15:365–66.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), pp. 169–170)

**Back to Revelation 7**

**4** And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

**5** Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.

**6** Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.

**7** Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.

**8** Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

**9** After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

**10** And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

**11** And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

**12** Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

**13** And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

**14** And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

**15** Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

**16** They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

**17** For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

These are the members of The Church of the Lamb. These are those that we went over in Chapter Three: Joseph's Boys; A Remnant of Jacob. These are those who, through varying tribulation, obtained the Power of the Lamb (1 Ne. 14), the power of priesthood to bring again

Zion (D&C 113), and now they are the jewels within the New Jerusalem, surrounding Him and His throne and worshiping Him within His temple. This is the Lord's tabernacle with men! The Lamb is in the midst! He shall lead them. He shall be their lawgiver and King! He shall wipe away all the tears from their eyes! They shall grow up as calves in the stall, and none shall hurt or molest in all His Holy Land! Blessed be that day, and blessed be the feet of those who declared those glad tidings! Blessed be those who gave such meat in the season! For they shall be His in that day!

I will end this chapter, actually, with:

**Revelation 8**

> **1** And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

Much like Isaiah 3 and 4, this last verse actually belongs at the end of Chapter 7 of Revelation and not at the start of Chapter 8.

**Revelation 4**

> **1** After this ***I looked, and, behold***…

**Revelation 5**

> **1** And ***I saw***…

**Revelation 6**

> **1** And ***I saw***…

**Revelation 7**

> **1** And after these things ***I saw***…

**Revelation 8**

> **1** And when he had opened the seventh seal, ***there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.***

This is clearly a misplacement of the idea breaks… There wasn't punctuation like we have, and writing in poetry form was designed to help people understand when and where the breaks were to occur…

**Revelation 8**

> **2** And ***I saw***…

**Revelation 9**

> **1** And the fifth angel sounded, and ***I saw***…

**Revelation 10**

> **1** And ***I saw***…

Understanding this will allow us more easily to see the connection to "silence in heaven." The footnote on "silence" takes you to "TG Silence." In the Topical Guide for "silence," we find the following:

**TG Silence**

> opened the seventh seal, there was *silence* in heaven, Rev. 8:1 ***(D&C 88:95)***.

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

> **92** ***And angels shall fly through the midst of heaven,*** crying with a loud voice, sounding the trump of God, saying: Prepare ye, prepare ye, O inhabitants of the earth; for the judgment of our God is come. Behold, and lo, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.
>
> **93** ***And immediately there shall appear a great sign in heaven, and all people shall see it together.***
>
> **94** And ***another angel*** shall sound his trump, saying: That great church, the mother of abominations, that made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, that persecuteth the saints of God, that shed their blood—she who sitteth upon many waters, and upon the islands of the sea—behold, she is the tares of the earth; she is bound in bundles; her bands are made strong, no man can loose them; therefore, she is ready to be burned. And he shall sound his trump both long and loud, and all nations shall hear it.
>
> **95** ***And there shall be silence in heaven for the space of half an hour;*** and immediately after shall the curtain of heaven be unfolded, as a scroll is unfolded after it is rolled up, and the face of the Lord shall be unveiled;
>
> **96** And the saints that are upon the earth, who are alive, shall be quickened and be caught up to meet him.

The footnote on "great sign" above in verse 93 takes you to both:

**Joseph Smith—Matthew 1**

> **36** And, as I said before, after the tribulation of those days, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken, ***then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven,*** and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory;
>
> **37** And whoso treasureth up my word, shall not be deceived, for the Son of Man shall come, and ***he shall send his angels before him with the great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together the remainder of his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.***
>
> **38** Now learn a parable of the fig tree—When its branches are yet tender, and it begins to put forth leaves, you know that summer is nigh at hand;
>
> **39** So likewise, mine elect, when they shall see all these things, they shall know that he is near, even at the doors;

**Luke 21**

> **25** ¶ And he answered them and said, In the generation in which the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity, like the sea and the waves roaring. The earth also shall be troubled and the waters of the great deep,
>
> **26** Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.
>
> **27** And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, ***for the day of your redemption draweth nigh.***
>
> **28** And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.
>
> **29** And he spake to them a parable, saying, Behold the fig tree and all the trees.
>
> **30** When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.
>
> **31** So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.
>
> **32** Verily, I say unto you, This generation, the generation when the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled, shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

**Chapter 36: The Lord's Second Coming**

> The Savior will make several appearances before His Second Coming to all the world.
>
> 1. Christ will appear at Adam-ondi-Ahman (see Daniel 7:9–10, 13–14; D&C 116).
> 2. The Savior will appear to those in the New Jerusalem in America (see 3 Nephi 21:23–25; D&C 45:66–67).
> 3. The Savior will appear to the Jews in Jerusalem (see D&C 45:48, 51–53; Zechariah 12:10; 14:2–5).

> 4. The Lord will appear in glory to all mankind (see D&C 45:44; 101:23; Matthew 24:30; Isaiah 40:5; JST, Revelation 1:7).
>
> (*Doctrines of the Gospel Student Manual* (Second edition, 2010))

It then explains what takes place at #4 (i.e., The Great and Dreadful Day):

> The veil will be removed from the earth when the Savior appears (***see D&C 88:95;*** 38:8; 101:23). … Faithful Saints, both living and dead, will be caught up to meet Christ at His coming (see D&C 88:96–98; 45:45; 76:63; 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17).
>
> (*Doctrines of the Gospel Student Manual* (Second edition, 2010))

Meaning that "the sign of the Son of Man" is a point of reference tied to the events between the sixth seal and seventh seal.

## Silence in Heaven for ½ Hour

There is silence in heaven described for "the space of half an hour" here, in which it says that "immediately after" that silence in heaven we have the Great and Dreadful Day.

**Moses 7**

> **62** And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.
>
> **63** And the Lord said unto Enoch: ***Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there***…

**JST, Genesis 14**

> **34** And his people wrought righteousness, and obtained heaven, and sought for the city of Enoch which God had before taken, separating it from the earth, having reserved it unto the latter days, ***or the end of the world;***

**Joseph Smith—Matthew 1**

> **4** And Jesus left them, and went upon the Mount of Olives. And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying: Tell us when shall these things be which thou hast said concerning the destruction of the temple, and the Jews; and what is the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world, ***or the destruction of the wicked, which is the end of the world?***

One of Joseph Smith's close associates, Wandle Mace, claimed that the Prophet said that this sign would be the return of the city of Enoch (cf. Moses 7:62–63). We have a quote from **Joseph Smith** recorded by Wandle Mace, "When Enoch and his city was taken away, a portion of earth was taken and would again be restored." Joseph Smith, when describing the sign, was reported to have also said that while the wicked will not understand its true significance—attributing it to a natural cause ***such as a planet or comet***—the righteous will know what it means. And the coming of the Son of Man will be like the dawning of the morning sun that moves along gradually from the east until it reaches unto the west. In a manner similar to the sun, this sign will be small at first but will gradually increase until it is "all in a blaze" and every eye sees it. (*The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet,* p. 181)

Ergo, the sign of the Son of Man is the city of Enoch returning. The city is to return "at the end of the world, or the destruction of the wicked, which is the end of the world." Meaning, the sign of the Son of Man, the City of Enoch returning to Earth, is a countdown to the Great and Dreadful day of the Lord. The "silence in heaven for the space of half an hour" is all the time Earth is going to receive between this point of reference and the Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord. Thus, the events at old Jerusalem must take place during this half hour of silence as well.

**2 Peter 3**

> **8** But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

1,000 Years / 1,440 Minutes (1 day) = X years / 30 minutes (½ hour)

30 × 1,000 Years / 1,440 = 20.8333 years

We know that the Lord breaks things into 7s (sign of perfection or completion), and so many conclude that this simply means 21 years. This is still the best interpretation for this, and we will expand upon that in subsequent Understanding Revelation chapters.

**Reddick Newton Allred**

> At night I dreamed that I heard a voice proclaim the appearing of the Lord, then a sudden light burst from the heavens, the stars fell and all creation shook. For a moment I feared that I should be consumed, then a sudden calmness prevailed and one said "why is this?" said I, "It is to be silence for half an hour and then the Lord will come." I then saw Joseph and Hyrum descend to the earth and address a large assembly of Saints that surrounded them and listen with attention to their instructions…
>
> (Teresa Andersen Burrell, *The Writings of Reddick Newton Allred: A Life of Faith and Obedience*)

# Revelation 8–11

## Revelation Chapter 8

**Revelation 8**

*John sees fire and desolation poured out during the seventh seal and preceding the Second Coming.*

There are two lines of thinking here surrounding the silence in heaven and these desolations. Both can't be true, but which one is correct?

1. One side says that the 7th seal will be opened in heaven, and then there is a silence in heaven for about the space of half an hour, and then the rest of the chapter follows.
2. The second line of thinking is that John sees that there is a silence ***in heaven*** for the space of about half an hour that directly ***"proceeds the Second Coming"*** (chapter subheading), and that this "Second Coming" most assuredly is in reference to *the Great and Dreadful Day,* or as the Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual states, "D&C 88:95–98. 'Silence in Heaven' Precedes Christ's ***Coming in Glory*** and the Celestial Resurrection" (p. 203).

Based on the evidence and clear reading of the pyramid of truth, option 2 is clearly the most sound. "John sees fire and desolation poured out ***during*** the half an hour of silence in heaven ***preceding*** [Christ's Coming in Glory]." Meaning, during that silence in heaven, these things have to take place on Earth, because at the end of the silence, the world experiences the Great and Dreadful Day. This is also confirmed in:

**Doctrine and Covenants 77**

> **12** Q. What are we to understand by the sounding of the trumpets, mentioned in the 8th chapter of Revelation?
>
> **A.** We are to understand that as God made the world in six days, and on the seventh day he finished his work, and sanctified it, and also formed man out of the dust of the earth, even so, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years will the Lord God sanctify the earth, and complete the salvation of man, and judge all things, and shall redeem all things, except that which he hath not put into his power, when he shall have sealed all things, unto the end of all things; and the sounding of the trumpets of the seven angels are the preparing and ***finishing*** of his work, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years—the preparing of the way before the time of his coming.

The Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual states:

**D&C 77:12. What is the Purpose for the Sounding of Trumpets by Seven Angels?**

> Trumpets were used anciently to herald or announce something or to draw attention to something. The seven angels who sound trumpets in Revelation 8–10 will signal events that will take place in the beginning of the seventh thousand years, after the seventh seal is opened (see Revelation 8:1), before the Lord comes in His glory.
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 170)

Meaning, the 7th seal is opened in heaven, and then the trumps start sounding, and then at the end of the half an hour of silence in heaven, the earth experiences the Great and Dreadful Day when the Lord comes in glory.

Proving this fact a little further:

**Joseph Smith—Matthew 1**

> **29** Behold I speak for mine elect's sake; for nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.
>
> **33** And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken.
>
> **36** And, as I said before, after the tribulation of those days, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken, then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory;

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country. The people of the Lord, those who have complied with the requirements of the new covenant, have already commenced gathering together to Zion, which is in the state of Missouri.
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 17)
>
> There ***will be*** wars and rumors of wars, signs in the heavens above and on the earth beneath, the sun turned into darkness and the moon to blood, earthquakes in divers places, the seas heaving beyond their bounds; ***then will*** appear one grand sign of the Son of Man in heaven. But what will the world do? They will say it is a planet, a comet, etc. But the Son of man will come as the sign of the coming of the Son of Man, which will be as the light of the morning cometh out of the east.
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 286)

And then, in Revelation Chapter 7, John sees the sealing of the 144,000—12,000 from each of the tribes called from the returned ten tribes:

**Revelation 7**

> **9** After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;
>
> **13** And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?
>
> **14** And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
>
> **15** Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.
>
> **16** They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.
>
> **17** For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

> **87** ***For not many days hence*** and the earth shall tremble and reel to and fro as a drunken man; and the sun shall hide his face, and shall refuse

> to give light; and the moon shall be bathed in blood; and the stars shall become exceedingly angry, and shall cast themselves down as a fig that falleth from off a fig tree.
>
> **93** And immediately there shall appear a great sign in heaven, and all people shall see it together.
>
> **95** And there shall be silence in heaven for the space of half an hour; ***and immediately after shall the curtain of heaven be unfolded, as a scroll is unfolded after it is rolled up, and the face of the Lord shall be unveiled;***

Based off of these, we have a clear understanding that these events were to happen in the future from Joseph Smith and in a specific order. The order is:

1. Redemption of Zion: "they have already commenced gathering together to Zion, which is in the state of Missouri and have complied with the requirements of the new covenant," the "white horse," etc.
2. Tribulation in the form of hail, famine, pestilence, moon to blood, war, sun darkened, the Red/Pale/Black horses, etc.
3. The 10 tribes return.
4. The 144,000 and innumerable host created.
5. Revelation Chapter 7 and Daniel Chapter 7 and 3 Nephi 21 and the Lord is in the midst of New Jerusalem on His throne surrounded by His Jewels event.
6. 7th seal is opened in heaven + half an hour of silence in heaven + the sign of the Son of Man.
7. ***Immediately after*** the silence in heaven is the Great and Dreadful Day (D&C 88:95).

Based off of this clear reading of the standard works and words of the Prophet Joseph Smith, it is clear there is only one "half an hour of silence" spoken of in scripture. The footnotes on these verses confirm this. If that is the case, that means that what we are reading in Revelation does not take place ***after*** the half an hour of silence, but ***during.***

But I hear one say, "Weren't all of those things supposed to happen after Joseph but still in the sixth thousand years?" They are getting this from:

**Doctrine and Covenants 77**

> **10** Q. What time are the things spoken of in this chapter to be accomplished?
>
> **A.** They ***are to be*** accomplished in the sixth thousand years, ***or*** the opening of the sixth seal.

Herein lies more confusion about the chronology of these events. If the Lord could have redeemed Zion at any time (D&C 105: 1–6) that would mean that there would be ***a period of time*** in which these things ***could happen.*** In the 1800s, they were living in the sixth thousand years, but the 6th seal had not been opened yet (as made manifest by the question ***"when*** will these things take place?" and the Lord's response of "that these things ***are to be,"*** meaning future from Joseph Smith, and "when the 6th seal is opened," meaning when Joseph asked the question, the 6th seal ***had not been opened yet***). Chances are we are now in the seventh thousand years, but the 6th seal has not been opened yet. The Lord said that these events would occur during the sixth thousand years ***OR*** the opening of the 6th seal—the use of the word "or" vs. the words "at" or "and" make it very clear that this was a contingent series of events that could take place any time post Joseph Smith Jr. and would kick off when the 6th seal is opened in heaven.

When you click on the footnote for "this chapter," the reference takes you to Revelation Chapter 7, and if you look at the footnotes for D&C 77:10, they take you to the events listed in Revelation 6:12–17 that we just read. Obviously, these events ***haven't happened yet.*** So how do we explain this in a way that people can understand? If you ask your mother, "When will you buy the frozen pizzas?" and her reply is, "Between 5–7 tonight or when I get to Walmart," does this mean that your mother is saying that she will be at Walmart between 5–7? Not necessarily. She is saying that it is a possibility, but she for sure will do it when she gets to Walmart. Likewise, the Lord is saying these events can transpire in the sixth thousand years (but they didn't). But they will for sure take place when the 6th seal is opened in heaven. This is important because the only other points of reference that the Lord provides for us is in:

**Doctrine and Covenants 77**

> **13** Q. When are the things to be accomplished, which are written in the 9th chapter of Revelation?
>
> **A.** They are to be accomplished after the opening of the seventh seal, before the coming of Christ.

What does this mean? Why did the Lord not just mention the seventh thousand years? Because the timing of the opening of the seals in heaven ***has nothing to do with the thousand years on Earth.*** So we know that the events that we previously listed occur during the sixth thousand years or at the opening of the 6th seal (not the same thing). We know that the angels in the 8th chapter (it did not say the chapter itself; this becomes important later on because the first couple verses of Chapter 8 aren't actually in the 7th seal—we will get to that) signal events in the seventh thousand years ***AND*** after the 7th seal is opened in heaven (once again, they aren't synonymous). Then we know that Chapter 9 takes place after the 7th seal has been opened, before the coming of the Lord in glory. This is important because the Lord identifies a chapter (chapter 7), then He identifies angels in a chapter (chapter 8), and then He identifies a chapter (chapter 9). The implication being that Revelation Chapter 8 as we currently have it ***isn't laid out correctly enough for the Lord to broad stroke the entire chapter.*** This means that we simply will not be able to broad stroke this entire chapter (chapter 8) but must read it and identify and build upon points of reference that we already have established—in the previous chapters it was seals; in these chapters it will be horns.

**Back to Revelation 8**

> **2** And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.
>
> **3** And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.
>
> **4** And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.
>
> **5** And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and ***an*** earthquake.
>
> **6** And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets ***prepared themselves to sound.***

So if one was reading this with no understanding of points of references, how would they go about figuring out when this takes place? We can't assume this is taking place after the 7th seal has been opened because that was in the previous chapter, and the Lord said that the angels ***blow their trumps*** after the 7th seal has been opened, and the angels here are simply ***preparing to blow their trumps.*** If it was a new chapter or thought, one might assume that there would be a little bit of an overlap. The footnote for verse 5 will help us understand when this takes place. The reference in verse 5 takes you to Doctrine and Covenants 88:87–92. Reading these verses, we will have our answer—let's make the comparison.

**Revelation 8**

> **4** And the smoke of the incense, which came ***with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.***

**5** And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and ***cast it into the earth***…

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

**87** For not many days hence and the earth shall tremble and reel to and fro as a drunken man; and the sun shall hide his face, and shall refuse to give light; and the moon shall be bathed in blood; ***and the stars shall become exceedingly angry, and shall cast themselves down as a fig that falleth from off a fig tree.***

**Revelation 8**

**5** … there were ***voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

**88** And after your testimony cometh wrath and indignation upon the people.

**89** For after your testimony cometh ***the testimony of earthquakes,*** that shall cause groanings in the midst of her, and men shall fall upon the ground and shall not be able to stand.

**90** And also cometh the testimony of ***the voice of thunderings, and the voice of lightnings, and the voice of tempests, and the voice of the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds.***

**91** And all things shall be in commotion; and surely, men's hearts shall fail them; for fear shall come upon all people.

**92** ***And angels shall fly through the midst of heaven, crying with a loud voice, sounding the trump of God, saying: Prepare ye, prepare ye, O inhabitants of the earth; for the judgment of our God is come.*** Behold, and lo, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

**93** And immediately there shall appear a great sign in heaven, and all people shall see it together.

**94** And another angel shall sound his trump, saying: That great church, the mother of abominations, that made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, that persecuteth the saints of God, that shed their blood—she who sitteth upon many waters, and upon the islands of the sea—behold, she is the tares of the earth; she is bound in bundles; her bands are made strong, no man can loose them; therefore, ***she is ready to be burned.***

**Revelation 8**

**6** And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets ***prepared themselves to sound.***

Why are the angels in verse 6 not blowing their horns? Why are they simply preparing themselves? What is stopping them? The 7th seal has not been opened yet. We haven't hit those points of reference yet!

Let's go back and re-read what takes place after the 6th seal is opened in heavens, to confirm the timeline:

**Revelation 6**

**9** And when he had opened the fifth seal, ***I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:***

**10** And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

**11** And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

**12** And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

**13** ***And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.***

**14** And the heavens opened as a scroll is opened when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

**15** And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

**16** And ***said to the mountains and rocks,*** Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

**17** For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

**Revelation 7**

**1** And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

**2** And I saw another ***angel ascending from the east,*** having the seal of the living God: and I heard him cry with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

**3** Saying, Hurt not the earth [don't blow your horns yet!], neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

**D&C 77:9. What Is the Significance of the Angel from the East Sealing the Servants of God?**

**Elder Orson Pratt** gave this additional explanation:

"When the Temple is built [in the New Jerusalem] the sons of the two Priesthoods [Melchizedek and Aaronic] … will enter into that Temple … and all of them who are pure in heart will behold the face of the Lord and that too before he comes in his glory in the clouds of heaven, for he will suddenly come to his Temple, and he will purify the sons of Moses and of Aaron, until they shall be prepared to offer in that Temple an offering that shall be acceptable in the sight of the Lord. In doing this, he will purify not only the minds of the Priesthood in that Temple, but he will purify their bodies until they shall be quickened, and renewed and strengthened, and they will be partially changed, not to immortality, but changed in part that they can be filled with the power of God, and they can stand in the presence of Jesus, and behold his face in the midst of that Temple.

"This will prepare them for further ministrations among the nations of the earth, it will prepare them to go forth in the days of tribulation and vengeance upon the nations of the wicked, when God will smite them with pestilence, plague and earthquake, such as former generations never knew. Then the servants of God will need to be armed with the power of God, they will need to have that sealing blessing pronounced upon their foreheads that they can stand forth in the midst of these desolations and plagues and not be overcome by them. When John the Revelator describes this scene he says he saw four angels sent forth, ready to hold the four winds that should blow from the four quarters of heaven. Another angel ascended from the east and cried to the four angels, and said, 'Smite not the earth now, but wait a little while.' 'How long?' ***'Until the servants of our God are sealed in their foreheads.' What for? To prepare them to stand forth in the midst of these desolations and plagues, and not be overcome.*** When they are prepared, when they have received a renewal of their bodies in the Lord's temple, and have been filled with the Holy Ghost and purified as gold and silver in a furnace of fire, then they will be prepared to stand before the nations of the earth and preach glad tidings of salvation ***in the midst of judgments that are to come like a whirlwind upon the wicked."*** (In *Journal of Discourses,* 15:365–66.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), pp. 169–170)

So, what are the angels waiting for in Revelation 8:6? They are waiting for the 7th seal to be opened in heaven, and the 7th seal isn't opened in heaven until after the redemption of Zion, the building of New Jerusalem and the 144,000 + the innumerable host of the Church of the Firstborn (the sealing) (i.e. Revelation 7, Daniel 7, D&C 88:92, Jesus in the midst New Jerusalem event).

We also know that the return of Joseph Smith has to occur before any of these events take place. Ergo, if Joseph hasn't openly returned, a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints cannot resonably claim that any of these events have occurred.

Around the opening of the 7th seal in heaven we have, once again:

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

> **94** … ***And he shall sound his trump both long and loud,*** and all nations shall hear it.
>
> **95** And there shall be silence in heaven for the space of half an hour…

This coincides perfectly with:

**Revelation 8**

> **7** The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

With this foundational understanding in place, it becomes clear that the angels are sounding their trumps on Earth during the half an hour of silence in heaven. The 7th seal was opened in heaven between verses 93 and 95 of Doctrine and Covenants 88, and the 7th seal was opened in Revelation Chapter 8 between verses 6 and 7. The 7th seal was opened not at verse 1 of Chapter 8, but in verse 18 of Chapter 7. With that understanding, the placement of the opening of the 7th seal becomes crystal clear—it ***is exactly the same in all three instances.*** You will know when the 7th seal is opened in heaven because, once again:

1. Tribulation (D&C 88:87–91, Revelation 6:12–1, JS–Matthew 33, Moses 7:61,66, etc.)
2. The angels are waiting (Revelation 8:6, Revelation 7:1–3, D&C 88:92)
3. The return of the ten tribes and translation and preparation of the 144,000 (that is what the angels are waiting for) (Moses 7:62, Revelation 7:4–9, 13–14)
4. Jesus in the midst of the innumerable host event in New Jerusalem (Revelation 7:9–10, 15–17, Daniel 7:13–14)
5. 7th seal is opened in heaven (Revelation 7:18, D&C 88:93–95, Revelation 8:7, JS–Matthew 26, 36, Moses 7:63) + first angel blows his horn + sign of the Son of Man

Every eye shall see the sign of the Son of Man, and every ear shall hear this trump, meaning, no one is going to miss the opening of the 7th seal. But in case you are thinking, "what if the whole world sees the sign or hears the trump and they don't comprehend it?" Joseph Smith made it clear that the Lord would not do anything unless He first reveals it to the prophet and the prophet reveals it to the world (*TPJS,* pp. 279–280).

The Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual summarizes this thus:

**D&C 88:93. The Sign of the Coming of the Son of Man**

> "Immediately after the testimony of these messengers [mentioned in D&C 88:92] a great sign ***will*** appear in heaven, which, ***like the sun, will be seen all round the world.*** Our Lord calls it the 'Sign of the Son of Man' (Matt. 24:30). …
>
> "… when the sign appears, ***God will make its meaning known to the Prophet, Seer and Revelator who at that time may be at the head of the Church, and through him to His people and the world in general."*** (Smith and Sjodahl, Commentary, p. 560.)"
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 203)

6. Half an hour of silence in heaven, during which the horns are blown and vials are poured out on earth

With that understanding developed, we should understand the task at hand for the remainder of the Revelation verses—figuring out what takes place ***during*** the silence in heaven (21 years).

That said however, currently without further revelation from the pyramid of truth, it is pointless to speculate on ***what*** these things specifically mean.

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie**

> ***Speculatively,*** most of the plagues and destructions here announced could be brought to pass by men themselves as they use the weapons and armaments they have created. (*The Millennial Messiah* [1982], p. 382)

Speculating on ***what*** these things mean specifically is moot. Instead, let's just read these on a macro level (i.e. points of reference) and learn what ***the effects*** of these events are (doctrine) versus ***what is specifically causing them*** (speculation).

**Back to Revelation 8**

**7** The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

The actual effects:

> …a third part of trees and all green grass are burnt up. (*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), "Chapter 54: Revelation 4–11")

This being a "third part" of the world is speculation; we don't have revealed what "the parts" are. This is true for every time the scriptures say "a third part" or "a part"—we don't know what those parts consist of, and we don't know that all parts are equal in quantity. For example, there will be bodies celestial, terrestrial and telestial. I could say "a third part" will be celestial, and that would be a correct statement, but that does not mean 33% of all God's children will be celestial. When Christ appears at the Great and Dreadful Day, the "third part" will be destroyed, meaning everything of a telestial order, which as we went over in the chapter A Day of Blood, means the overwhelming majority of mankind—it clearly does not mean that He is only destroying 33% of people. The Lord breaks mankind prophetically down between "Jew, Gentile, and Heathen" often, and "a third part" being burnt or killed, etc., could be a reference to "all Gentile nations." We know that there is first the cleansing of the Gentile nations (a third part), and then there is a cleansing of the Jews (a third part), and finally a cleansing of the Heathens (the last third part). These prophecies of Babylon are directed at the Gentiles, and it is a build up towards the events at the Mt. of Olives with the Jews.

**Back to Revelation 8**

**8** And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

**9** And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

The actual effects:

> Third part of the sea becomes blood; third part of living creatures of the sea die; third part of ships are destroyed. (*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), "Chapter 54: Revelation 4–11")

Once again note the "third part."

**Back to Revelation 8**

**10** And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;

**11** And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

The actual effect:

> …third part of rivers and waters are made bitter; many men die. (*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), "Chapter 54: Revelation 4–11")

**Back to Revelation 8**

**12** And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

The actual effect:

> …third part of the sun, moon, and stars are smitten and darkened. (*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), "Chapter 54: Revelation 4–11")

It is important to note here how similar ***but still how very different*** the 6th seal event—"the sun shall be darkened"— is from the 7th seal event—third part of the sun, moon, and stars are smitten and darkened.

**Back to Revelation 8**

**13** And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

This is why the last three are commonly called "the three woes"—they are talking about the last 3 of 7 events that are to transpire, preparatory to and climaxing in Jesus setting foot on the Mount of Olives, which is the third woe.

This is the perfect place to stop and explain something before we get into the last three woes.

**Orson Pratt**

> All this takes place after these trumps begin to sound; and if these two witnesses are to fulfill a mission of three and a half years, it shows that the sounding of the trumpets does not take place, as many have supposed, in rapid succession, but certain events have to be accomplished between their respective soundings. By and by the whole seven will have sounded, and then they commence to sound a second time. According to the revelation from which I have read, the second sounding of the trumpets is not to prudence destruction among the nations, but the sound of the first one will reveal the secret acts of God, his purposes and doings on the earth during the first thousand years; the sounding of the second will reveal the doings and purposes of the Great Jehovah during the second thousand years, and so on, until the seventh shall sound the second time, and pronounce the work of God finished, so far as the great preparation needful for his second coming is concerned.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 16, Discourse 43)

Meaning, these events do not transpire in rapid succession, but rather a horn is blown, the event transpires, and then the next horn blows and its event transpires, etc. We aren't given any specific time period on these four horns, but the last three woes absolutely have time frames given, so this is important!

## Revelation Chapter 9

**Revelation 9**

*John also sees the wars and plagues poured out during the seventh seal and before the Lord comes.*

**1** And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to the angel was given the key of the bottomless pit.

**2** And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

**3** And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

**4** And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

**5** And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented ***five months:*** and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

**6** And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

**7** And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

**8** And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.

**9** And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

**10** And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men ***five months.***

**11** ***And they had a king over them,*** which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.

The actual effects:

> … the sun and air are darkened; those without the seal of God are tormented for five months. (*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), "Chapter 54: Revelation 4–11")

It is important to note two things here,

1. We are given our first time frame—that this event happens for at least 5 months
2. This is the first mention of the Anti-Christ, or here named "their king"

If someone places the Anti-Christ before this point in time, they don't know what they are talking about.

**Back to Revelation 9**

**12** One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

This confirms that when the angel said "woe, woe, woe" in verse 13 of Revelation 8, it wasn't just grammatical, it was literal—the last three trumps are referred to as "the three woes."

**Back to Revelation 9**

**13** And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

**14** Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the bottomless pit.

**15** And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for ***an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year,*** for ***to slay the third part of men.***

**16** And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

**17** And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

**18** By these three ***was the third part of men killed,*** by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

**19** For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

**20** And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

**21** Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

The actual effects:

> …third part of men are killed. (*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), "Chapter 54: Revelation 4–11")

Once again, it is important to note that there is a time frame given here—this time period takes no less than one year + one month + one day + one hour (verse 15). This period is being spearheaded by four of Satan's angels, or followers of Satan. We will get into the mark of the beast in later chapters. It is interesting to note that the first woe opened what was called "the bottomless pit," and something came out of this bottomless pit, the effect of which was to lower the morale and battle-readiness of people. It did not actually kill them. In the second woe, the bottomless pit was opened further, and now an actual army is coming out; however, this army actually kills people. This follows typical modern warfare.

**Joel 1**

**4** That which the ***palmerworm*** hath left hath the ***locust*** eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the ***cankerworm*** eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the ***caterpiller*** eaten.

**6** For a nation is ***come up*** upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion.

**Joel 2**

**2** A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.

**3** A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.

**4** The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run.

**5** Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array.

**6** Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness.

**7** They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks:

**8** Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.

**9** They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.

**Micah 7**

**17** They shall lick the dust like a serpent, ***they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth:*** they shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and shall fear because of thee.

The imagery of this great, evil latter-day army being like insects coming from the earth "like worms" is also very interesting. Its eventual goal is the destruction of Jerusalem, which is the second woe, which we will get into in Revelation Chapter 11. Revelation Chapter 10 takes a break, I believe intentionally so, because John himself has a specific and personal role to fulfill during the second woe, and John had to accept that calling before being shown it.

## Revelation Chapter 10

**Revelation 10**

*John seals up many things relative to the last days—He is commissioned to participate in the restoration of all things.*

**1** And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:

**2** And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth,

**3** And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

**4** And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

**5** And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

**6** And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer:

To get an idea of where John is at right now, as well as what is the most likely interpretation for the "seven thunders," we need to turn Doctrine and Covenants 88 once again:

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

**108** And then shall the first angel again sound his trump in the ears of all living, and reveal the secret acts of men, and the mighty works of God ***in the first thousand years.***

**109** And then shall the second angel sound his trump, and reveal the secret acts of men, and the thoughts and intents of their hearts, and the mighty works of God ***in the second thousand years***—

**110** ***And so on, until the seventh angel shall sound his trump; and he shall stand forth upon the land and upon the sea, and swear in the name of him who sitteth upon the throne, that there shall be time no longer;*** and Satan shall be bound, that old serpent, who is called the devil, and shall not be loosed for the space of a thousand years.

**112** And Michael, the seventh angel, even the archangel…

The contents of these books, these "seven thunders," are not revealed to men until that time, at which point in time they shall be revealed by Michael, or Adam.

**Back to Revelation 10**

**7** But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

This is an interesting point of reference that actually points to the next chapter when the seventh angel is sounding in verse 15. What's being said here is that all mystery will be gone by the events at the Mount of Olives. Everything will be revealed. In the section "A Marvelous Work and Wonder" we went over how all things will be revealed, starting with the return of Joseph Smith Jr. It will include the sealed portion, the returned ten tribes' scriptures, etc. but here we learn that all things will be revealed by the events at the Mt. of Olives. This is most likely so that once Jerusalem is cleansed, the entire Word can "go forth from Jerusalem" in complete purity.

**Back to Revelation 10**

**8** And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

**9** And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

**10** And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.

**11** And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy ***again*** before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

In the Church, one has to accept a calling and receive the authority before one can receive revelation for things pertaining to the calling.

**Revelation 10:1–2, 9–10. "Little Book"**

> A "mighty angel" delivered "a little book" to John, and he "ate it up" (Revelation 10:1–2, 10), symbolizing his mission…(D&C 77:14; see also D&C 7:1–3). Eating the book may suggest that John accepted his mission: it became a part of his being. That the book was "sweet as honey" in John's mouth but "bitter" in his belly (Revelation 10:10) may suggest that his mission would involve many sweet and joyous experiences but also rejection and painful experiences (see also Psalm 119:103). ***Ezekiel also ate, or internalized, a book*** (see Ezekiel 2:6–3:3).
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), Chapter 54: Revelation 4–11)

In the overview for the Book of Revelation in the Student Manual, Section B, it says:

**The Little Book Interlude (Revelation 10:1–11, Revelation 11:1–14)**

> Between the sounding of the sixth trumpet and the vision of the two special witnesses in Jerusalem, an angel delivers a book to John and demands him to eat it. We know from latter-day revelation that this symbolizes a special mission given to John to participate in the gathering of Israel (see D&C 77:14). Thus John is shown in vision ***his part*** in the great events of the future. Two special witnesses are slain in Jerusalem and then resurrected.

The identities of the two witnesses have not been revealed, but they will be legal administrators for God's kingdom, which at this point in time will be the Church of the Firstborn in New Jerusalem. Meaning, attempting to attach current apostles and prophets to these two witnesses is moot. At that point in time, John the Revelator will be an active, open, administrator to the kingdom of God. Not only is the eating of the book important to take note of at this time, but also what the Lord said to John:

**Mark 10**

> **31** But many that are first shall be last; and the last first.
>
> **32** ¶ And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him,
>
> **33** Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles:
>
> **34** And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.
>
> **35** ¶ And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire.
>
> **36** And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?
>
> **37** They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.
>
> **38** But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: ***can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?***
>
> **39** ***And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:***
>
> **40** But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.

This is crucial to understand because these two witnesses that we will be reading about are in similitude of the Savior (i.e., they will "indeed drink of the cup that Christ drank of, and with the baptism that Christ was baptized withal shall they be baptized").

The two prophets will be in Jerusalem preaching for 3.5 years, then are betrayed and killed. It's important to note here that the Savior was not actually *killed* as some incorrectly maintain, he *gave up his life willingly*—they could not actually *kill* Christ. The two prophets shall lie dead in the streets for 3.5 days as their enemies rejoice, and then they are resurrected.

It is important to note that any identifying of these two ***is purely speculation; it is not revealed.*** Anybody claiming to know who these two are as a matter of fact or doctrine are not only incorrect, they are teaching unrevealed doctrine. What we do know is that this entire event will be in similitude of the Savior, so chances are the two prophets likewise cannot be killed and will voluntarily lay down their own lives and on the third day be resurrected. This could only take place with translated beings.

## Revelation Chapter 11

**Revelation 11**

*In the last days, two prophets will be slain in Jerusalem—After 3½ days, they will be resurrected—Christ will reign over all the earth.*

**1** And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

**2** But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot ***forty and two months.***

Once again, it is interesting that John was told to measure the lot of the temple as ***though he would need that information for when he rebuilt the temple.*** Three of the footnotes here for a single verse take you to Ezekiel where ***he was also shown very specific measurements for this temple. The same Ezekiel who also had to eat a scroll.***

**Ezekiel 3**

> **1** Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel.
>
> **2** So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll.
>
> **3** And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness.

Also, we need to note the 3.5 years (42 months) as an exact time frame again. Some people ignorantly opine that this 3.5 year is not literal, but rather figurative. This, however, destroys entirely the symbolic comparison between the two prophets and the ministry of the Savior 2,000 years previous…

**Back to Revelation 11**

**3** And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a ***thousand two hundred and threescore days,*** clothed in sackcloth.

Once again, the 3.5 years is identified. So the "the three woes" are said to be:

1. 5 months
2. "one year + one month + one day + one hour" = 13 months (plus change)
3. 42 months (or 3.5 years)

Doing some basic math we know that these three woes last for at least 60 months, or a total of 5 years. So by this we know that there is to be ***at least 5 years*** between the opening of the 7th seal in heaven and this event. We learned in Isaiah that the child, which is New Jerusalem, won't reach the age of accountability (8 years) before the events in Valley of Decision (Isaiah Ch 7/ 2 Nephi 17) occur. Which means that from the opening of the 7th seal in heaven to the Battle of Armageddon/Valley of Decision, the time frame is greater than 5 years and less than 8 years. These two coincide perfectly with an understanding that trumps 1–4 could take months or years themselves.

The second thing to note in this verse is that in the footnote it says, "the Greek text omits the word 'power'"—why would this be significant? In the first instance, the Lord gives these two individuals power in that day. If the word *power* is omitted, it could mean what? It means that these two witnesses could have obtained power long before this event. So if the word power is omitted, the Lord is saying that he will give these two witnesses ***time*** at that day, ***not their authority*** at that day.

The student manual for Revelation Chapter 11 under Two Witnesses says:

**Revelation 11:3–12. Two Witnesses**

> These two prophets appear to possess the sealing power of the priesthood, with which they are able to control the skies and smite the earth with plagues (see 1 Kings 17:1, Helaman 10:6–11, Moses 7:13–17, JST Genesis 14:30–31 [in the Bible appendix]).
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), "Chapter 54: Revelation 4–11")

**D&C 77:15. Who Are the Two Witnesses Referred to by John?**

> **Elder Parley P. Pratt** wrote: "John, in the eleventh chapter of Revelation, gives us many more particulars concerning [the great war in Israel after the Jews are gathered there]. He informs us that after the city and temple are rebuilt by the Jews, the Gentiles will tread it under foot forty and two months, during which time there will be two prophets continually prophesying and working mighty miracles. And it seems that the Gentile army shall be hindered from utterly destroying and overthrowing the city, while these two prophets continue. But, after a struggle of three years and a half, they will at length succeed in destroying these two prophets and then overrunning much of the city; they will send gifts to each other because of the death of the two prophets, and in the meantime will not allow their dead bodies to be put in graves, but suffer them to lie in the streets of Jerusalem three days and a half, during which time the armies of the Gentiles, consisting of many kindreds, tongues and nations, passing through the city, plundering the Jews, will see their dead bodies lying in the street. But after three days and a half, on a sudden, the spirit of life from God will enter them; they will arise and stand upon their feet, and great fear will fall upon them that see them. And then they shall hear a voice from heaven saying, 'Come up hither,' and they will ascend up to heaven in a cloud, with enemies beholding them." (*Voice of Warning,* p. 33.) …
>
> The two witnesses are raised up *"to* the Jewish nation" and are not necessarily *from* the Jewish nation (see D&C 77:15–16; italics added.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 170–171)

As I have gone over already, the identities of these two have not been revealed. Remember there is no such thing as "deep doctrine," there is only revealed doctrine vs. unrevealed doctrine, and the identity of these two ***is unrevealed doctrine.*** So talking specifically about the identity of these two witnesses ***is purely unrevealed doctrine and thus should be avoided,*** as ***any topic*** of unrevealed doctrine should be. We don't even know if they will be Jewish or not (tribe of Judah) or which dispensation they will come from.

But we can read a little bit about what these two will be doing:

**Back to Revelation 11**

**4** These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

**5** And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

**6** These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

**Zechariah 4**

> **11** Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof?
>
> **12** And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?
>
> **13** And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.
>
> **14** Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

**(33-17) Zechariah 4:2. What Does the Candlestick Represent?**

> The candlestick represents Judah, who had returned from exile in Babylon (see Dummelow, *Commentary,* p. 603).
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 343)

**(33-18) Zechariah 4:3, 11–14. Who Are the Two Olive Trees?**

> The two olive trees represent Joshua and Zerubbabel (see Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 3:510).
>
> Joshua and Zerubbabel can be seen as messianic types, "who as Spirit-filled men convey blessing from God to church and state, and are a type of the Messiah as Priest and King" (Guthrie and Motyer, *New Bi-*

*ble Commentary,* p. 791). The same imagery was used by John in Revelation 11:4.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003),

p. 343)

Which brings me to my next point, which is that with dualism and types, things can be fulfilled multiple times. Bruce R. McConkie believed that this was fulfilled with Joshua and Zerubbabel, however, it is important to understand that there will be multiple fulfillments of prophecy, but only one primary; there are things that will occur with the tribe of Joseph that will be mirrored with the tribe of Judah.

**Ezekiel 37**

**15** The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying,

**16** Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions:

**17** And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand.

**18** And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these?

**19** Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand.

**20** And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes.

**21** And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land:

**22** And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all:

The Book of Mormon is the stick of Joseph. It was written and compiled with the sole purpose of getting the tribe of Joseph to New Jerusalem. With that in mind, let's turn to:

**2 Nephi 8**

**16** And I have put my words in thy mouth, and have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion: Behold, thou art my people.

**17** Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury—thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling wrung out—

**18** And none to guide her among all the sons she hath brought forth; neither that taketh her by the hand, of all the sons she hath brought up.

**19** These two sons are come unto thee, who shall be sorry for thee—thy desolation and destruction, and ***the famine*** and the sword—and by whom shall I comfort thee?

**20** Thy sons have fainted, ***save these two;*** they lie at the head of all the streets; as a wild bull in a net, they are full of the fury of the Lord, the rebuke of thy God.

**21** Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, and drunken, and not with wine:

**22** Thus saith thy Lord, the Lord and thy God pleadeth the cause of his people; behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again.

**23** But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; who have said to thy soul: Bow down, that we may go over—and thou hast laid thy body as the ground and as the street to them that went over.

**24** Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.

**25** Shake thyself from the dust; arise, sit down, O Jerusalem; loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

Now the question would be, why would Jacob include this? Why would Jacob be teaching this to his people ***as the redemption of the tribe of Joseph?*** Also, what is "the famine" (verse 19)? There are a lot of famines and there will be a lot of famines, just like there has been a lot of earthquakes and there will be a lot of earthquakes. But if somebody in scripture would refer to ***"the*** earthquake" there is a 99.99% chance that they are referring to the earthquake brought about at the Mount of Olives. So what is ***"the*** famine" that this is referring to? What is the most important famine that has ever or will ever transpire? Ether gives us the answer in Chapter 13—the famine that Joseph went through in Egypt was a type of this famine that is to transpire in the last days ***surrounding the building of the New Jerusalem.*** The most important city that the world has ever and will ever know is the New Jerusalem. It will be complete—even the city of Enoch was never complete.

**Isaiah 52**

**13** Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

**14** As many were astonied at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:

**15** So shall he gather many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

Jesus Christ himself, in 3 Nephi 20:42–46 and 3 Nephi 21:8–11, specifically talks of this servant (verse 13), and the footnotes clearly identify this servant as being Joseph Smith Jr. Meaning, Joseph and Hyrum ***were also*** a fulfillment to this. We have to understand the mirror principle (the first shall be last and the last first), for the things that occur for Joseph will have similar things that occur for Judah. Isaiah 51 and 52, etc. might not have anything to do with Revelation 11 (Judah), while Isaiah 51 and 52, 3 Nephi 20 and 21, could deal primarily with Joseph and Hyrum. These events will be similar, but are in fact two completely different events.

Although we do not know, or rather it is unrevealed, who these two are in Revelation Chapter 11, we know for a fact that Joseph and Hyrum are the two for the tribe of Joseph, and though they were marred for a season (just like lying dead in the street), they will be resurrected. The same concept.

**Back to Revelation 11**

**7** And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

**8** And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, ***where also our Lord was crucified.***

**9** And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

**10** And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

**11** And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

**12** And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

**13** And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

**14** The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

There are a bunch of different prophets that talk about the third woe. Instead of going to all of these different locations and reading what each prophets says, I'd suggest just reading Enrichment I: The Battle of Armageddon: A Prophetic View in the Old Testament Student Manual.

**(I-2) Significance of the Name *Armageddon***

In the southern part of Galilee in present-day Israel, about sixty miles north of Jerusalem, is a broad and fertile plain. Today it is one of the richest agricultural areas of the state of Israel and is often called Israel's breadbasket. It runs from the Bay of Haifa on the northern coast in a southeast direction to the River Jordan. Fifteen miles wide at its greatest breadth, the valley of Esdraelon (its Greek name is still used today) is flanked on the north by the Nazareth ridge and on the south by Mount Carmel, Mount Gilboa, and the hills of Samaria.

One of the most important highways of antiquity passed through the valley. The *Via Maris,* or "Way of the Sea," ran up the coast from Egypt, turned inland just south of present-day Haifa and Mount Carmel, followed an important pass through the hills, and then dropped into the Plain of Esdraelon. Because of the strategic importance of the pass, a fortified city lay at the entrance into the valley. The city was Megiddo, which name means in Hebrew "the place of troops" (see Samuel Fallows, ed., *The Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia and Scriptural Dictionary,* s.v. "Megiddo"). Because it lay on the flank of a hill, it was also known as *Har-Megiddo* or the "Mount of Megiddo." In the English versions of the New Testament the name is rendered *Armageddon* (see Revelation 16:16).

From the earliest days, the valley of Armageddon, or the Plain of Esdraelon, has been the site of great battles. It has felt the tramp of Egyptian foot soldiers, heard the shouts of Assyrian battalions, witnessed the passing of Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian troops, watched as Jewish guerrillas fought Roman legionnaires, heard the cries of Crusaders and Moslems locked in battle, and has felt the crunch of Israeli troops maneuvering against Arab forces. Megiddo: "the place of troops." One would be hard pressed to find a more appropriate name for this tiny area of the world's geography.

And one would be hard put to find a more appropriate name for the last great battle of the world before the Savior comes. It was John who named it when he said: "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon" (Revelation 16:16). From that statement the name has come to be applied to the entire great war, although the phrase "battle of Armageddon" is not found in the scriptures. Some erroneously conclude that the final battle of the war will be fought there, but, as **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** pointed out, the final struggles will center around Jerusalem, though they may extend to Megiddo.

"Some 60 air miles north of Jerusalem lies the ancient city of *Megiddo* (now called Tell el-Mutesellim). In its north-central Palestinian location, Megiddo overlooks the great Plain of Esdraelon, an area of some 20 by 14 miles in which many great battles took place anciently. Megiddo is the older Hebrew form of *Armageddon* or *Har-Magedon* meaning the Mount or Hill of Megiddo, or the Hill of Battles; it is 'the valley of *Megiddon'* mentioned in Zechariah. (Zech. 12:11.)

"At the very moment of the Second Coming of our Lord, 'all nations' shall be gathered 'against Jerusalem to battle' (Zech. 11; 12; 13; 14), and the *battle of Armageddon* (obviously covering the entire area from Jerusalem to Megiddo, and perhaps more) will be in progress. As John expressed it, 'the kings of the earth and of the whole world' will be gathered 'to the battle of that great day of God Almighty, … into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.' Then Christ will 'come as a thief,' meaning unexpectedly, and the dramatic upheavals promised to accompany his return will take place. (Rev. 16:14–21.) It is incident to this battle of Armageddon that the Supper of the Great God shall take place (Rev. 19:11–18), and it is the same battle described by Ezekiel as the war with Gog and Magog. (Ezek. 38; 39; *Doctrines of Salvation,* vol. 3, p. 45.)" (*Mormon Doctrine,* p. 74.)

**President Joseph Fielding Smith** indicated that this great war would be one of the last events before Christ comes in His glory:

"One thing we are given by these prophets definitely to understand is that the great last conflict before Christ shall come will end at the siege of Jerusalem. …

"So we are given to understand that when the armies gather in Palestine will be the time when the Lord shall come in judgment and to make the eventful decision which will confound the enemies of his people and establish them in their ancient land forever." (*Doctrines of Salvation,* 3:46–47.)

Obviously, this is an event of great importance to the world, and the Lord has given a wealth of detail so that those who will listen can be prepared and comforted as the greatest war in the history of the world begins to unfold.

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), "Enrichment I: The Battle of Armageddon: A Prophetic View," pp. 291–292)

**(I-4) Armageddon: The Participants**

Ezekiel and Jeremiah indicated areas that will be involved and named Israel as the target of the war:

1. Ezekiel named Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Meshech and Tubal, as the leader of the forces that would come against Israel (see Ezekiel 38:1–3). Magog, Meshech, and Tubal were ancient peoples in the northern part of Asia Minor (see Notes and Commentary on Ezekiel 38:2–6). Gog is a symbolic name for the leader or leaders of this great evil power that will arise in the last days.
2. Ezekiel named Persia, Ethiopia, Libya, Gomer, and Togarmah as being in alliance with Gog (see Ezekiel 38:2–6; see also Notes and Commentary on Ezekiel 38:2–6 and the Bible Dictionary).

   These designations refer to general areas of the ancient world, so a list of modern nations fighting in Armageddon cannot be compiled from these sources. **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** said: "The prophecies do not name the modern nations which will be fighting for and against Israel, but the designation Gog and Magog is given to the combination of nations which are seeking to overthrow and destroy the remnant of the Lord's chosen seed." (*Mormon Doctrine,* p. 298.)
3. The prophets agreed that all nations should be joined in this alliance in one way or another (see Jeremiah 25:26; Joel 3:1; Zechariah 14:2; Revelation 16:14).
4. The strategic objective of this great and evil alliance is clearly the nation of Israel (see Ezekiel 38:8, 15–16; Joel 2:1; 3:1–2; Zechariah 14:2).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), "Enrichment I: The Battle of Armageddon: A Prophetic View," p. 292)

**(I-5) Armageddon: The Army of Gog**

Several of the prophets vividly described in figurative language the power and massiveness of this army.

**Ezekiel** described it as "clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords" (Ezekiel 38:4) and as coming like "a storm" and "a cloud to cover the land" (v. 9), having "many people" with him, "all of them riding upon horses [a symbol of power in war], a great company, and a mighty army" (v. 15).

**Daniel** described the "king of the north" as coming with a "great army" which others have no "strength to withstand" (Daniel 11:13, 15) and as coming "like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over" (v. 40). Elder Joseph Fielding Smith specifically identified Daniel 11–12as referring to the last days (see *Signs of the Times,* p. 156).

**Joel** stated that the army would be the greatest army in the history of the world up to that point (Joel 2:2). He described it as being like a "fire" that devours the land, leaving what had looked like the "garden of Eden" before their coming as "a desolate wilderness" (Joel 2:3; see also Joel 2:2, 4–5). Joel also said that the army would be highly disciplined in warfare and virtually invincible: "When they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded" (Joel 2:8; see also Joel 2:7, 9).

**John the Revelator** used the imagery of a cloud of locusts (vast numbers that bring great devastation) and described the army as having the "teeth of lions," "breastplates of iron," and "wings" that sounded like the "sound of chariots of many horses running to battle" (Revelation 9:8–9). The army was numbered "two hundred thousand thousand" (Revelation 9:16), having "breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone" and with "fire and smoke and brimstone" issuing "out of their mouths" (Revelation 9:17). **Elder Bruce R. McConkie**, referring to the imagery of John and Joel, suggested that "it is not improbable that these ancient prophets were seeing such things as men wearing or protected by strong armor; as troops of cavalry and companies of tanks and flame throwers; as airplanes and airborne missiles which explode, fire shells and drop bombs; and even other weapons yet to be devised in an age when warfare is the desire and love of wicked men" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 3:503).

It will be partly through the aid of false religionists working miracles that so many people join in this unholy alliance (see Revelation 13:11–15; 19:20). **Elder Orson Pratt** taught that "so great will be the darkness resting upon Christendom, and so great the bonds of priestcraft with which they will be bound, that they will not understand, and they will be given up to the hardness of their hearts. Then will be fulfilled that saying, That the day shall come when the Lord shall have power over his Saints, and the Devil shall have power over his own dominion. He will give them up to the power of the Devil, and he will have power over them, and he will carry them about as chaff before a whirlwind. He will gather up millions upon millions of people into the valleys around about Jerusalem in order to destroy the Jews after they have gathered. How will the Devil do this? He will perform miracles to do it. The Bible says the kings of the earth and the great ones will be deceived by these false miracles. It says there shall be three unclean spirits that shall go forth working miracles, and they are spirits of devils. Where do they go? To the kings of the earth; and what will they do? Gather them up to battle unto the great day of God Almighty. Where? Into the valley of Armageddon." (In *Journal of Discourses,* 7:189.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), "Enrichment I: The Battle of Armageddon: A Prophetic View," p. 293)

**(I-6) Gog Will Be Thwarted by the Power of Two Witnesses**

One question that arises as one studies the prophetic picture is, How could a nation as tiny as modern Israel stand against the combined armies of the world? The answer lies in an understanding of the role of two important participants in these great events.

**John the Revelator** gave the most detailed picture of these two participants. They are called the "two witnesses," the "two olive trees" and the "two candlesticks" (Revelation 11:3–4). Latter-day revelation teaches that they are "two prophets … raised up to the Jewish nation" who will "prophesy to [them] after they are gathered and have built … Jerusalem" (D&C 77:15).

These prophets will have power to pronounce great judgments upon the earth (see Revelation 11:5–6).

"They shall have power like Elijah who called down fire from heaven to consume his enemies, and who sealed the heavens that it rained not in all Israel for the space of three and a half years (1 Kings 17and 18; 2 Kings 1), and like Moses by whose word blood and plagues lay heavily upon the Egyptians. (Ex. 7, 8, 9, and 10.)" (McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 3:510.)

Their miraculous power seems to be the force preventing Gog and his army from succeeding in annihilating Israel. **Elder Parley P. Pratt** wrote: "John, in the eleventh chapter of Revelation, gives us many more particulars concerning this same event. He informs us that after the city and temple are rebuilt by the Jews, the Gentiles will tread it under foot forty and two months, during which time there will be two prophets continually prophesying and working mighty miracles. And it seems that the Gentile army shall be hindered from utterly destroying and overthrowing the city, while these two prophets continue." (*A Voice of Warning,* p. 33.)

**Isaiah** called these prophets "two sons" and said they were the only hope of deliverance for Israel because they would be "full of the fury of the Lord" (JST, Isaiah 51:19–20; see also JST, Isaiah 51:17–18).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), "Enrichment I: The Battle of Armageddon: A Prophetic View," pp. 293–294)

**(I-7) Armageddon: The Final Extremity**

**John** showed that eventually the two prophets will be captured and killed by the opposing army, and their bodies will be left in the streets of Jerusalem for "three days and an half" as the forces of evil engage in a great celebration over their death (Revelation 11:9; see also Revelation 11:7–8, 10).

"That level of spiritual debauchery is shown forth by the fact that the wicked not only slay the prophets of God, but boast of their deeds and glory in them. Such people, as the Jaredites and Nephites before them, are ripened in iniquity and are ready for that destruction and burning which shall cleanse the vineyard of corruption when Jesus descends with his chariots of fire." (McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 3:510.)

During the "three days and an half" that the prophets lie dead in the streets, the army will ravage the city of Jerusalem and the remaining population of Israel (Revelation 11:9). **Elder Pratt** explained: "After a struggle of three years and a half, they [Gog's army] will at length succeed in destroying these two prophets and then overrunning much of the city; they will send gifts to each other because of the death of the two prophets, and in the meantime will not allow their dead bodies to be put in graves, but will suffer them to lie in the streets of Jerusalem three days and a half, during which time the armies of the Gentiles, consisting of many kindreds, tongues, and nations, passing through the city, plundering the Jews, will see their dead bodies lying in the street." (*Voice of Warning,* p. 33.)

**Zechariah** says that only one-third of the nation of Israel will survive this final extremity when the "city [Jerusalem] shall be taken, and the houses rifled [looted], and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity" (Zechariah 14:2; see also Zechariah 13:8–9; 14:1).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), "Enrichment I: The Battle of Armageddon: A Prophetic View," p. 294)

**Finishing Revelation 11**

**15** And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

**16** And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

**17** Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

**18** And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

**19** And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

**(I-8) Armageddon: The Deliverance**

In what will be one of the blackest moments of Israel's history, just as it appears that they are about to be annihilated, the Lord's fury will be unleashed upon the kingdoms of the world (see Ezekiel 38:18), and the Lord will "go forth, and fight against those nations" (Zechariah 14:3).

1. The two prophets, lying dead in the streets of Jerusalem, will be resurrected in the sight of the people (see Revelation 11:11–12): "After three days and a half, on a sudden, the spirit of life from God will enter them; they will arise and stand upon their feet, and great fear will fall upon them that see them. And then they shall hear a voice from heaven saying, 'Come up hither,' and they will ascend up to heaven in a cloud, with their enemies beholding them." (Pratt, *Voice of Warning,* p. 33.)
2. An earthquake will strike the earth, affecting the whole world—the greatest earthquake the world has ever known (see Revelation 11:13; 16:18; Ezekiel 38:19–20; Haggai 2:6–7).

   **Elder McConkie** taught:

   "Three natural changes in the earth—all apparently growing out of one transcendent happening—are here named [Revelation 16:17–21] as attending our Lord's Second Coming. They are:

   "1. Earth's land masses shall unite; islands and continents shall become one land.

   "2. Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain shall be made low; the rugged terrain of today shall level out into a millennial garden.

   "3. Such an earthquake as has never been known since man's foot was planted on this planet shall attend these changes in the earth's surface and appearance.

   "And, fourthly, as recorded elsewhere, the great deep—presumably the Atlantic ocean—shall return to its place in the north, 'and the earth shall be like as it was in the days before it was divided.' (D. & C. 133:21–24.)" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 3:543.)

   This quake will evidently create a huge spring in Jerusalem which will form a new river, flowing westward to the Mediterranean Sea and eastward to the Dead Sea (see Zechariah 14:8–9; Joel 3:18; Ezekiel 47:1–5). Because of this river, the Dead Sea will have its waters healed, that is, it will become a lake with verdant foliage surrounding its shores and fish teeming in its waters (see Ezekiel 47:6–12; **Joseph Smith**, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 286).

   The area around Jerusalem, which is now very hilly and steep, will be smoothed out and become like "a plain" (Zechariah 14:10).
3. The Mount of Olives will be split in two, providing an avenue of escape for the house of Israel (see Zechariah 14:4–5).

   "All [the prophets] speak of [this day]; and when that time comes, the Lord is going to come out of His hiding place. You can see what a terrible condition it is going to be; and the Jews besieged, not only in Jerusalem but, of course, throughout Palestine are in the siege; and when they are about to go under, then the Lord comes. There will be the great earthquake. The earthquake will not be only in Palestine. There will not be merely the separation of the Mount of Olives, to form a valley that the Jews may escape, but the whole earth is going to be shaken. There will be some dreadful things take place, and some great changes are going to take place, and that you will find written in the book of Ezekiel (38:17–23)." (Smith, *Signs of the Times,* p. 170.)
4. As the Jews flee through this avenue of escape they will see their Messiah who has come to deliver them. In gratitude and joy they will throw themselves at the feet of the Deliverer and discover the wounds in His hands and feet. Suddenly they will realize that their Messiah is the Messiah who came to them before, and the Jewish nation will be converted to their God. (see Zechariah 14:5; 12:9–10; 13:6; D&C 45:47–53.)
5. The Lord's fury upon the army of Gog will consist of other judgments in addition to the great earthquake:

   The armies of Gog will turn upon each other, perhaps in the panic and confusion of the great earthquake (see Ezekiel 38:21; Zechariah 14:13).

   A great rain of fire and hail will shower down upon the army (see Ezekiel 38:22; D&C 29:21; Revelation 16:21). John said the hailstones will weigh a talent, which is about 75.6 pounds or 34.3 kilograms (see Bible Dictionary, s.v. "weights and measures"). Ezekiel stated that fire will also be sent against the land of Magog (see Ezekiel 39:6). The account by Ezekiel could very easily be a description of atomic warfare. Isaiah described the fire's effect on the land itself (see Isaiah 34:9–10).

   A plague will strike the army, causing terrible disease and calamity (see Zechariah 14:12; compare D&C 29:18–20).

   The result will be that only one-sixth of the invading army will survive the Lord's judgments (see Ezekiel 39:2), and their power to make war will be destroyed. In Jerusalem itself, 7000 will be slain, and one-tenth of the city destroyed (see Revelation 11:13).

   So great will be the devastation that for seven years Israel will be able to live off the spoils of war left behind (see Ezekiel 39:8–10). It will take seven months to bury the dead, and thereafter burial teams will search out the remaining bodies in an attempt to cleanse the land (see Ezekiel 39:11–16). Isaiah said that the Lord "hath delivered them to the slaughter … and the mountains shall be melted with their blood" (Isaiah 34:2–3). Jeremiah stated that the Lord "will give them that are wicked to the sword, … and the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other" (Jeremiah 25:31, 33).

   The judgments of the Lord upon the armies of Gog is known in the scriptures as the great day of the Lord's "sacrifice" (see Isaiah 34:5–6; Ezekiel 39:17–22), the Lord's "controversy with the nations" (Jeremiah 25:31), the "supper of the great God" (Revelation 19:17; see also Revelation 19:18–21), and "the great winepress of the wrath of God" (Revelation 14:19; see also Revelation 19:15; D&C 133:48–51).
6. Elder Charles W. Penrose summarized the foregoing list of events: "The bankrupt nations, envying the wealth of the sons of Judah, will seek a pretext to make war upon them, and will invade the 'holy land' to 'take a prey and a spoil.' …

   "His [Christ's] next appearance [after coming to his temple] will be among the distressed and nearly vanquished sons of Judah. At the crisis of their fate, when the hostile troops of several nations are ravaging the city and all the horrors of war are overwhelming

> the people of Jerusalem, he will set his feet upon the Mount of Olives, which will cleave and part asunder at his touch. Attended by a host from heaven, he will overthrow and destroy the combined armies of the Gentiles, and appear to the worshipping Jews as the mighty Deliverer and Conquerer so long expected by their race; and while love, gratitude, awe, and admiration swell their bosoms, the Deliverer will show them the tokens of his crucifixion and disclose himself as Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had reviled and whom their fathers put to death. Then will unbelief depart from their souls, and 'the blindness in part which has happened unto Israel' be removed." ("The Second Advent," *Millennial Star,* 10 Sept. 1859, pp. 582–83.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), "Enrichment I: The Battle of Armageddon: A Prophetic View," pp. 294–295)

In conclusion, we are told that this act made the nations of the world angry (verse 18) and that the nations ***should*** be judged (verse 18), and the Lord promises that He ***shouldest*** destroy, implying that the Great and Dreadful Day and the Mount of Olives ***are not synonymous.*** Meaning, there will be a period after the Mount of Olives event before the Great and Dreadful Day. The Old Testament Student Manual points to there being ***seven months to bury the dead and seven years of living off of the spoils,*** which means that the Great and Dreadful Day is ***at least seven years after this event,*** for nobody is living off of spoils of war after the Great and Dreadful Day.

Two things to note specifically about this period between the Mt. of Olives and the Great and Dreadful Day:

## 1. The Day of the Heathen

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> The building up of Zion is a cause that has interested the people of God in every age; it is a theme upon which prophets, priests and kings have dwelt with peculiar delight; they have looked forward with joyful anticipation to the day in which we live; and fired with heavenly and joyful anticipations they have sung and written and prophesied of this our day; but they died without the sight; we are the favored people that God has made choice of to bring about the Latter-day glory; it is left for us to see, participate in and help to roll forward the Latter-day glory, "the dispensation of the fulness of times, when God will gather together all things that are in heaven, and all things that are upon the earth," "even in one," ***when the Saints of God will be gathered in one from every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue, when the Jews will be gathered together into one, the wicked will also be gathered together to be destroyed,*** as spoken of by the prophets; the Spirit of God will also dwell with His people, and be withdrawn from the rest of the nations, and all things whether in heaven or on earth will be in one, even in Christ. The heavenly Priesthood will unite with the earthly, to bring about those great purposes; and whilst we are thus united in one common cause, to roll forth the kingdom of God, the heavenly Priesthood are not idle spectators, the Spirit of God will be showered down from above, and it will dwell in our midst. The blessings of the Most High will rest upon our tabernacles, and our name will be handed down to future ages; our children will rise up and call us blessed; and generations yet unborn will dwell with peculiar delight upon the scenes that we have passed through, the privations that we have endured; the untiring zeal that we have manifested; the all but insurmountable difficulties that we have overcome in laying the foundation of a work that brought about the glory and blessing which they will realize; a work that God and angels have contemplated with delight for generations past; that fired the souls of the ancient patriarchs and prophets; ***a work that is destined to bring about the destruction of the powers of darkness, the renovation of the earth, the glory of God, and the salvation of the human family.*** (May 2, 1842. DHC 4:608–610).
>
> ("All Things to Be Gathered in One," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 231–231)

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> **47** Then shall the arm of the Lord fall upon the nations.
>
> **48** And then shall the Lord set his foot upon this mount, and it shall cleave in twain, and the earth shall tremble, and reel to and fro, and the heavens also shall shake.
>
> **49** And the Lord shall utter his voice, and all the ends of the earth shall hear it; and the nations of the earth shall mourn, and they that have laughed shall see their folly.
>
> **50** And calamity shall cover the mocker, and the scorner shall be consumed; and they that have watched for iniquity shall be hewn down and cast into the fire.
>
> **51** And then shall the Jews look upon me and say: What are these wounds in thine hands and in thy feet?
>
> **52** Then shall they know that I am the Lord; for I will say unto them: These wounds are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. I am he who was lifted up. I am Jesus that was crucified. I am the Son of God.
>
> **53** And then shall they weep because of their iniquities; then shall they lament because they persecuted their king.
>
> **54** ***And then shall the heathen nations be redeemed,*** and they that knew no law shall have part in the first resurrection; and it shall be tolerable for them.

**Ezekiel 36**

> **1** ¶ But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went. ...
>
> **22** Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned ***among the heathen, whither ye went.***
>
> **23** And I will sanctify my great name, ***which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.***
>
> **33** Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded.
>
> **34** And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by.
>
> **35** And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited.
>
> **36** Then ***the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I, the LORD, build the ruined places and plant that which was desolate; I, the LORD, have spoken it; and I will do it.***
>
> **37** Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock.
>
> **38** As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

**Ezekiel 37**

> **26** Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.
>
> **27** My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

**28** ***And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.***

**Ezekiel 38**

**16** And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, ***that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.***

**17** Thus saith the Lord GOD; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them?

**18** And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that my fury shall come up in my face.

**19** For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel;

**20** So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.

**21** And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: ***every man's sword shall be against his brother.***

**22** And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

**23** ***Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the LORD.***

**Ezekiel 39**

**6** And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

**7** So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and ***I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel.***

**21** ***And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them.***

**22** So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day and forward.

**23** ¶ ***And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword.***

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**8** That thereby they may be perfected in their ministry for the salvation of Zion, and of the nations of Israel, and of the Gentiles, as many as will believe;

**9** That through your administration they may receive the word, and through their administration the word may go forth unto the ends of the earth, ***unto the Gentiles first, and then, behold, and lo, they shall turn unto the Jews.***

**10** ***And then cometh the day when the arm of the Lord shall be revealed in power in convincing the nations, the heathen nations,*** the house of Joseph, of the gospel of their salvation.

**Joseph Smith Jr.** of that day said that:

The heathen nations who will not come up to worship will be visited with the judgments of God, and must eventually be destroyed from the earth. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 268)

**Zechariah 14**

**16** ¶ And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

**17** And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, ***even upon them shall be no rain.***

**18** And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

**19** This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

## 2. The Ten Tribes Return to Palestine

**(D-7) The Lost Tribes to Come to Zion**

The ten tribes, however, are to eventually receive their land inheritance with Judah and not with Ephraim (see Ether 13:11), and there will come a time after they have received their priesthood blessings when they will go to Jerusalem. In that day will be fulfilled the statement of Jeremiah: "In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers" (Jeremiah 3:18).

**Elder Orson Pratt** stated further: "By and by, when all things are prepared—when the Jews have received their scourging, and Jesus has descended upon the Mount of Olives, the ten tribes will leave Zion, and will go to Palestine, to inherit the land that was given to their ancient fathers, and it will be divided amongst the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. They will go there to dwell in peace in their own land from that time, until the earth shall pass away. But Zion, after their departure, will still remain upon the western hemisphere, and she will be crowned with glory as well as old Jerusalem, and, as the Psalmist David says, she will become the joy of the whole earth. 'Beautiful for situation is Mount Zion on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.'" (In *Journal of Discourses,* 18:68.)

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), "Enrichment D: The Assyrian Conquest and the Lost Tribes," p. 116)

# Revelation Chapters 12–14

In Matthew 24, the Lord gives a doctrinal rundown of points of reference and series of events culminating in the verses 36–51. Directly after which the Lord gave the Parable of the 10 Virgins, the Parable of the Talents and the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats. If one looks at verses 36–51 of Matthew 24, one would come away with the knowledge that these subsequent parables were given as an additional reference or way to understand what He just taught. For example, I might teach the commandments and the principle of obedience, and then directly after that, I might share the story of the girl and the plastic necklace and the story of the boy and the kite (two stories that emphasize or teach the importance of obedience and sacrifice). I'm not teaching anything new per se, but it's a way for me to wrap up everything I just taught in a way that will hopefully help people understand more clearly. We saw this same pattern when we studied Isaiah when we got to Isaiah Chapter 6. There are many people who understand things differently. Some people are extremely visual in nature; others are more auditory. The Lord and all good teachers will make use of visions, imagery, etc. to emphasize, re-teach, or confirm truths already taught.

Now why is this important to discuss before going into this specific grouping of Revelation chapters? Because there are those who teach Revelation 12–14 as though the entire series of chapters are all over the map. One verse could be talking about the pre-earth Life, and the very next verse could be talking about the early Christian church; the next verse is talking about the pre-earth life again, while the next verse after that is talking about the future. No seriously, this is how it is taught by a lot of people… For example, they will teach Revelation 12:1–3 as though it is teaching of the early Christian church, verse 4 is talking about the pre-earth life, verse 5 is talking about the great apostasy, verses 6–11 are referring to the pre-earth life again, verse 12 they think is the time of Adam, verses 13–14 is the early Christian church again, and then in verses 15–17 we are somehow in the future.

Does any of that make any fluid sense? I'd argue that this would make the book of Revelation one of the most complicated and convoluted books ever written, not what Joseph Smith said, that it was "one of the plainest books God ever caused to be written" (*TPJS,* p. 290).

If somebody wants to read by those secondary interpretations, God bless them! However, that is not what we're going to do here in this chapter. Using the pyramid of truth, let us lay out the standard:

> ***Joseph Smith, John, and the angel were all correct—the book of Revelation has to do with John the Revelator's time period and forward, and it is one of the plainest books God ever caused to be written. (TPJS, p. 290)***

So what could be going on in Chapters 12–14 of Revelation? Let's take a moment to think about the time period we have covered so far in the book of Revelation. In Chapter 1, we start with the focus on the condition of the Saints in The Church of Jesus Christ, and by Chapter 11 we are at the Mount of Olives. That is a lot of teaching and a lot of points of reference! Then from Revelations 12–14, we seem to have the exact same ideas cropping up again… so what happened? What is the Lord doing here? The Lord, as He has done many times in the past, stops at this moment to re-teach everything that He just taught, but in a more visual form. I.e., Revelation chapters 1–11 are retaught in visual form in Revelation chapters 12–14. Once again, the Lord does this in a different format as a summary, but also as a way to further help one understand what had just been said.

Thus, Revelation Chapter 12, with its symbolism and parable-like nature. will start with a focus on the condition of Saints within The Church of Jesus Christ, and by the end of Chapter 14 we should be back at the Mount of Olives.

**Revelation Chapter 12 (JST)**

**1** And there appeared a great sign in heaven, in the likeness of things on the earth; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.

The plain reading of this leads one to the interpretation that John is shown something in heaven—a vision, a parable, etc. that is representative of, or in the likeness of, something on the earth. If this dealt with the pre-earth life, John would have said, "I was shown a vision in heaven in the likeness of things in the pre-earth life, and these things foreshadow, or are a type of, things that are playing out here on Earth." But he didn't say that. He said, "I was shown a vision/parable/etc., and it was in the likeness of things on the earth."

**Luke 13**

> **18** Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?
>
> **19** It is like a grain of mustard, which a man took and cast into his garden; and it grew and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.
>
> **20** And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?
>
> **21** It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

Combining these two statements to best be able to understand, we get:

> *And there appeared a great sign in heaven, in the likeness of [the Kingdom of God]; [a grain of mustard, which a man took and cast into his garden; and it grew and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.]*

If we took the Lord's parable of the ten virgins and said that the entire thing dealt with the pre-earth life and that series of events that transpired in the pre-earth life is a type of something that will play out on Earth, would anyone object to that? Would anyone raise their hand and object? Would anyone want to know why or how someone would jump to such a seemingly random conclusion? I'd hope so—for that is ***not*** what was said. Those who purport that these scriptures deal with the pre-earth life have to first translate these symbols into things and events in the pre-earth life, for obviously there wasn't a woman walking around on a moon with a dragon following her in the pre-earth life (they do this despite the fact that John said that these things were in the likeness of things on the earth and not things in the past, and Joseph Smith also said what John saw dealt with his time period and futurity). Then they claim that John was shown those things in the pre-earth life because they were similar to events that would happen shortly in John's time period forward (despite the fact that no such comparison from the pre-earth life to John's time period is mentioned in the writ).

> *And there appeared a great sign in heaven [I saw a vision, parable, etc.], in the likeness of things on the earth [it dealt with, related to, was likened to, resembled, etc.]; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.*

What is actually happening here? John is shown a vision, parable, etc. (like the ten virgins), but this vision dealt with things to take place in the last days—meaning from John's time period forward, and he is now going to share that vision with us, starting with this woman.

Based off of what we already have gone over in Revelation Chapter 5, the crown of 12 stars should be obvious— that is the 12 apostles, or "ser-

vants," of the Lord. The sun is a symbol of Celestial glory, and the moon is a symbol of terrestrial glory and also a symbol for the earth, which we will get to in verse 3. The woman is the Church, which is confirmed in D&C 33:5 and D&C 86:3 (we will read them later in this chapter). So far, this checks out. This is what was gone over in chapters 1–3 of Revelation—the Saints of Christ's Church and Kingdom on the earth.

**Back to Revelation 12**

**2** And the woman being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

**3** And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up unto God and his throne.

We get a clear definition later that the woman is the Church of God, and the child she brought forth, the "man child who was to rule all nations with a rod of ion," is both the Kingdom of our God ***and*** Christ. A lot of people will include the Kingdom of God in their interpretation of the child, but miss the most important part of the Kingdom, which is the Christ. It is His Kingdom. And "the [man child] was caught up unto God and his throne"—this should let us know where we are. This is Revelation Chapters 4 and 5 (Christ goes back to the throne of God and gets the book). So once again, so far we have gone from Revelation Chapters 1–5. It is a perfect summary up to that point in time; it isn't a stretch.

**Back to Revelation 12**

**4** And there appeared another sign in heaven; and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, ***and did cast them to the earth.*** And the dragon stood before the woman which was delivered, ready to devour her child after it was born.

**5** And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore ***years.***

Satan gathers his followers and attacks the child as soon as it is born. Verse 5 explains the Great Apostasy that followed.

**Doctrine and Covenants 86**

**1** Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you my servants, concerning the parable of the wheat and of the tares:

**2** Behold, verily I say, the field was the world, and the apostles were the sowers of the seed;

**3** And after they have fallen asleep the great persecutor of the church, the apostate, the whore, even Babylon, that maketh all nations to drink of her cup, in whose hearts the enemy, even Satan, sitteth to reign—behold he soweth the tares; wherefore, the tares choke the wheat and drive the church into the wilderness.

Satan and his followers here plant the bad seeds; they plant the tares and the Church is driven into apostasy. At this time we also know that the great and abominable Church is formed. Joseph Smith translated this and changed this to years from days—many choose to intentionally ignore this change to better fit their narrative. We know that Moroni lived to about the year 400 AD, and we know that John the Revelator is a translated being, so we don't know when he was technically taken, and we also don't know when the 10 tribes *potentially* fell into apostasy. What we do know is that the Lord established the Kingdom in Jerusalem and then established appendages of that Kingdom in the Americas with the tribe of Joseph and with the lost ten tribes who were led out of Jerusalem (3 Nephi 16: 1–5). What we do know is that 1260 years later, the woman began to come out of the wilderness, which, depending on which year you use, puts it at a lot of interesting dates, including the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock (1620), etc.

The next verses might ruffle some people's feathers because members are under the belief that the war in Heaven ended in the pre-earth life, which is, as far as the pyramid of truth is concerned, unrevealed doctrine. So before continuing, let's take a moment to really reflect on the wording that we just read above:

**4** …and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them ***to the earth.***

"Right!" I hear one exclaim, "The war in heaven was when Satan fought and was cast out ***to the earth*** with those that followed him! That ***ALL*** took place ***MICAH,*** in the ***pre***-earth… umm… wait… err…"

Oh no! You're doing great! Keep going now… don't stop! How were Satan and his followers cast down to an earth ***that wasn't even created yet…?*** Great question!

**Abraham 3**

**21** I dwell in the midst of them all; I now, therefore, have come down unto thee to declare unto thee the works which my hands have made, wherein my wisdom excelleth them all, for I rule in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, in all wisdom and prudence, over all the intelligences thine eyes have seen from the beginning; I came down in the beginning in the midst of all the intelligences thou hast seen.

**22** Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized ***before the world was;*** and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones;

**23** And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born.

**24** And there stood one among them that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him: We will go down, for there is space there, and ***we will*** take of these materials, and ***we will*** make an earth whereon these may dwell;

**25** And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them;

**26** And they who keep their ***first estate*** shall be added upon; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their ***second estate*** shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever.

**27** And the Lord said: Whom shall I send? And one answered like unto the Son of Man: Here am I, send me. And another answered and said: Here am I, send me. And the Lord said: I will send the first.

**28** ***And the second was angry, and kept not his first estate; and, at that day, many followed after him.***

**Abraham 4**

**1** ***And then*** the Lord said: Let us go down. And they went down at the beginning, and they, that is the Gods, organized and formed the heavens and the earth.

Many teach that Satan was cast down to Earth as soon as he kept not his first estate, but according to the scriptures, Satan lost his first estate before Earth was even formed. Satan could not be "cast down" to a location that did not exist. We need to understand that there were large sections of time between these points of reference because of that fact, which we will prove with the scriptures. At this time, Satan and those who followed after him were "cast out," in that they lost their ability to be in the presence of the Father. This would be similar to members today being excommunicated and being unable to go to the temple. We still live in the same cities as them, but they can't come into the presence of the Son, and only one of us has a promise of something in the life to come. They lost the promise of a life to come just like the wicked in this life lose the promise of exaltation in the world to come, but they were not kicked out of the "city." There was not a separation of the

wicked and the righteous physically. They were not kicked out of heaven because there was no Earth for them to be kicked down to.

**Jude 1**

**6** And the angels which kept not their first estate, ***but left their own habitation,*** he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

**Jude 1:6. "The Angels Which Kept Not Their First Estate"**

Jude wrote about the spirits who rebelled against God in the premortal world and followed Lucifer, calling them "angels which kept not their first estate" (Jude 1:6; see also Abraham 3:26, 28). Here, "estate" refers to a person's rank or position. Because these spirits rebelled against the Father, ***they lost their standing before God and did not qualify for the privilege of coming to mortality—our second estate.***

While serving as a member of the Seventy, **Elder L. Lionel Kendrick** discussed the premortal events ***that led to*** the casting out of Satan and his followers: "Lucifer used his divine gift of agency to make a decision ***that would lead*** to his eternal damnation. In bold opposition, he rebelled against God and 'kept not his first estate' [Abraham 3:28]. 'A third part of the hosts of heaven turned he away from me [the Lord God] because of their agency' [D&C 29:36; italics added]. Even with ***the possibility*** of their eternal damnation, Heavenly Father would not take their agency from them. To do so would be counter to eternal law. As ***a result*** of their rebelliousness, Lucifer and his followers ***were*** cast out of heaven and forfeited the blessings of eternal life" ("Our Moral Agency," *Ensign,* Mar. 1996, 30–31).

(*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), "Chapter 52: 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, and Jude")

Note that according to Jude, ***"they*** left their first estate," which is agency, a choice—which is different than being cast down to Earth, unable to return. Once again, we need to understand that these are ***separate points of reference*** with an unrevealed amount of time passing between them! Going back to Abraham to prove this:

**Abraham 4**

**2** And the earth, after it was formed, was empty and desolate, because they had not formed anything but the earth; and darkness reigned upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of the Gods was brooding upon the face of the waters.

**3** ***And they (the Gods) said: Let there be light; and there was light.***

**4** ***And they (the Gods) comprehended the light, for it was bright; and they divided the light, or caused it to be divided, from the darkness.***

**5** ***And the Gods called the light Day, and the darkness they called Night. And it came to pass that from the evening until morning they called night; and from the morning until the evening they called day; and this was the first, or the beginning, of that which they called day and night.***

...

**8** And the Gods called the expanse, Heaven. ***And it came to pass that it was from evening until morning that they called night; and it came to pass that it was from morning until evening that they called day; and this was the second time that they called night and day.***

...

**13** ***And it came to pass that they numbered the days; from the evening until the morning they called night; and it came to pass, from the morning until the evening they called day; and it was the third time.***

**14** ***And the Gods organized the lights in the expanse of the heaven, and caused them to divide the day from the night; and organized them to be for signs and for seasons, and for days and for years;***

**15** ***And organized them to be for lights in the expanse of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so.***

**16** ***And the Gods organized the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; with the lesser light they set the stars also;***

**17** ***And the Gods set them in the expanse of the heavens, to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to cause to divide the light from the darkness.***

**18** ***And the Gods watched those things which they had ordered until they obeyed.***

**19** ***And it came to pass that it was from evening until morning that it was night; and it came to pass that it was from morning until evening that it was day; and it was the fourth time.***

...

**23** ***And it came to pass that it was from evening until morning that they called night; and it came to pass that it was from morning until evening that they called day; and it was the fifth time.***

...

**27** ***So the Gods went down to organize man in their own image, in the image of the Gods to form they him, male and female to form they them.***

**Abraham 5**

**1** And thus we will finish the heavens and the earth, and all the hosts of them.

**2** And the Gods said among themselves: On the seventh time we will end our work, which we have counseled; and we will rest on the seventh time from all our work which we have counseled.

**3** And the Gods concluded upon the seventh time, because that on the seventh time they would rest from all their works which they (the Gods) counseled among themselves to form; and sanctified it. And thus were their decisions at the time that they counseled among themselves to form the heavens and the earth.

**4** And the Gods came down and formed these the generations of the heavens and of the earth, when they were formed in the day that the Gods formed the earth and the heavens,

**5** According to all that which they had said concerning every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew; for the Gods had not caused it to rain upon the earth when they counseled to do them, and had not formed a man to till the ground.

**6** But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

**7** And the Gods formed man from the dust of the ground, and took his spirit (that is, the man's spirit), and put it into him; and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

**8** And the Gods planted a garden, eastward in Eden, and there they put the man, whose spirit they had put into the body which they had formed.

**9** And out of the ground made the Gods to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life, also, in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

**10** There was a river running out of Eden, to water the garden, and from thence it was parted and became into four heads.

**11** And the Gods took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it.

**12** And the Gods commanded the man, saying: Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat,

**13** But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the time that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. ***Now I, Abraham, saw that it was after the Lord's time, which was after the time of Kolob; for as yet the Gods had not appointed unto Adam his reckoning.***

**Moses 4**

> **1** And I, the Lord God, spake unto Moses, saying: That Satan, whom thou hast commanded in the name of mine Only Begotten, is the same which was from the beginning, and he came before me, saying—Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor.
>
> **2** But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever.
>
> **3** Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he ***should be cast down;***
>
> **4** And he ***became*** Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice.

Based off of the context provided in Abraham, we know, once again, that Satan wasn't immediately cast down to Earth, because there was no Earth yet. We also don't know the timing of the word "should" in verse 3—was the Father telling his children that they ***should*** cast Satan out? It reads, "the Father ***caused"*** (past tense) that Satan ***"should*** be cast down"—***should*** (future tense) be cast down. It is then explained that Satan ***became*** the devil, and in the next verses the Lord explains how Lucifer became the devil, which was by attempting to interfere with God's plan by tempting Eve through the serpent.

> **5** And now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which I, the Lord God, had made.
>
> **6** And Satan put it into the heart of the serpent, ***(for he had drawn away many after him,)*** and he sought also to beguile Eve, ***for he knew not the mind of God, wherefore he sought to destroy the world.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 29**

> **36** And it came to pass that Adam, being tempted of the devil—for, behold, ***the devil was before Adam,*** for he ***rebelled*** against me, saying, Give me thine honor, which is my power; and also a third part of the hosts of heaven ***turned he away from me*** because of their agency;
>
> **37** And they ***were*** thrust down, and thus ***came*** the devil and his angels;

From these verses it seems to confirm, once again, that Satan and his followers weren't immediately cast out of heaven, for Satan had time to draw people after him. It also teaches of an almost temple-like procedure or meeting where the Father presents the plan in a temple. We commonly refer to this as "the grand council in Heaven." God's children have to say "yes" and agree to the plan presented before continuing on in the meeting/temple, while those who disagree with the plan have to leave the temple. Those who stay are taught the rest, the complete plan. This explains why Satan was acting in ignorance. Satan never saw the full plan—"he knew not the mind of God." And these acts that he was now doing were turning him into what we now call "the devil." Once again, since it was awhile back, what were the scriptures in Revelation 12 again?

> **4** And there appeared another sign in heaven; and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, ***and did cast them to the earth.*** ...

At the very least, this event had to take place ***post the creation of the world***... and doctrinally speaking, there is nothing we have to say that this event didn't take place exactly when Revelation 12 says it took place:

> **4** ... And the dragon stood before the woman which was delivered, ready to devour her child after it was born.
>
> **5** And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore years.

According to Revelation 12, these events took place around the start of the Great Apostasy. As we continue to read Revelation 12, are these findings confirmed? Let's keep reading.

**Back to Revelation 12**

> **6** And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought against Michael;
>
> **7** And the dragon prevailed not against Michael, neither the child, nor the woman which was the church of God, who had been delivered of her pains, and brought forth the kingdom of our God and his Christ.

We as Saints love to teach that the war in Heaven never ended, that it continues here on Earth and that we have help from the other side of the veil in this war. We teach that Satan and his followers attack us mortals, and we teach that the angels in heaven help us mortals. Why then is it impossible for members to believe that the war between those on the other side of the veil also continues?

Not only is the doctrine of those on the other side of the veil fighting each other probable, it is taught—for Peter, James and John, we learn in the temple, openly contended with Satan in front of Adam on earth. That is revealed doctrine.

But wait, there's more:

**Job 1**

> **6** Now there was a day when the children of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.
>
> **7** And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

**Job 2**

> **1** Again there was a day when the children of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord.
>
> **2** And the Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

It is important to note that the LDS Student Manual says that it is unknown whether this was poetic or literal; ***however,*** we have a Joseph Smith Translation in these verses, and Joseph left it the way it was—meaning, Joseph only changed the word "sons" to "children."

By comparison however, Joseph Smith changed "and it repented the Lord" in the Old Testament (Gen 6: 6), he also changed "and the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple" in the New Testament (Matthew 4: 5), etc. So Joseph changed and translated a ton of things like this throughout scripture, including redoing ***the whole of Revelation Chapter 12*** (which we are studying). So if there were major doctrinal errors in this, or if it was simply strange imagery or poetic—Joseph would have changed it or made that clear in his JST. Joseph also flat out said that the Song of Solomon was uninspired, meaning it is garbage *regardless of its poetic themes.* It wasn't even worth Joseph Smith's time giving it a translation, but yet we are supposed to believe that what we are reading here in Job with a JST is not literal?

Not according to the pyramid of truth... We have to say that these scriptures are proof that Satan had more power and more mobility than we like to realize, clearly up to the time of Job. What was Satan doing with these "children of men" in Job?

**Alma 40**

> **11** Now, concerning the state of the soul between death and the resurrection—Behold, it has been made known unto me by an angel, that the spirits of all men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body, yea, the spirits of all men, whether they be good or evil, are taken home to that God who gave them life.
>
> **12** And then shall it come to pass, that the spirits of those who are righteous are received into a state of happiness, which is called paradise, a state of rest, a state of peace, where they shall rest from all their troubles and from all care, and sorrow.
>
> **13** And then shall it come to pass, that the spirits of the wicked, yea, who are evil—for behold, they have no part nor portion of the Spirit of the Lord; for behold, they chose evil works rather than good; therefore the spirit of the devil did enter into them, and take possession of their house—and these shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, and this because of their own iniquity, being led captive by the will of the devil.
>
> **14** Now this is the state of the souls of the wicked, yea, in darkness, and a state of awful, fearful looking for the fiery indignation of the wrath of God upon them; thus they remain in this state, as well as the righteous in paradise, until the time of their resurrection.

**Revelation 12:8–10. Satan Accuses Day and Night**

> Joseph Smith Translation, Revelation 12:8 reads: *"Neither was there place found in heaven for* the great dragon *who* was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and *also called* Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he *who* was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."
>
> The name-title "Satan" comes from a Hebrew verb meaning "to accuse," "to slander," or "to be an adversary." Thus, the title "accuser" (Revelation 12:10) reflects Satan's efforts as the adversary of the human family, charging people with sin. On the other hand, Jesus Christ is our advocate, pleading to God on behalf of those who believe in Him (see D&C 45:3–5).
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), "Chapter 55: Revelation 12–16")

**Back to Revelation 12**

**8** Neither was there place found in heaven for the great dragon, who was cast out; that old serpent called the devil, and also called Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out ***into the earth;*** and his angels were cast out with him.

**9** And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ;

**10** ***For the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.***

Satan is cast down here and loses his ability, or power, to freely traverse between the world and the heavens (what we learned about in Job). We also learn in verse 10 what he, Satan, has been spending the majority of his time doing—accusing people before the throne of God, day and night.

If these verses do in fact deal with the pre-earth life, we already have three major problems:

1. What has Satan been accusing people of? If this all took place in the pre-earth life, that would mean no one would have been born yet, and thus no one would have sinned yet, and thus there would be nothing for Satan to accuse of.
2. Michael says this has been going on "day and night"—if this dealt with the pre-earth life, what is Michael talking about? There was no day and night before the earth was created. We went over that above in Abraham.
3. Once again, you can't be cast down to an earth that hasn't been formed yet.

In the plain reading of this, however, we learn that it wasn't until this moment—post the earth being created, post men and women being born, post the woman giving birth to the man child who was to rule all nations being caught up to God and His throne, etc.—that Satan is finally, permanently kicked out of heaven. The next natural question would be, "if that is true, why did it take so long?" The next verse explains this "why" and also how it went down.

**Back to Revelation 12**

**11** For they have overcome him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; for they loved not their own lives, but kept the testimony even unto death. Therefore, rejoice O heavens, and ye that dwell in them.

So, Michael and his followers (most likely Peter, James, John the Baptist, etc.) overcame Satan in heaven by the blood of the Lamb; the Savior's atonement didn't happen until 33 AD. What's more, specifically after the mentioning of the atonement, it talks of special martyrs. We know that the majority of the Twelve Apostles (and some that replaced them, such as Paul) "loved not their own lives, ***but kept the testimony even unto death."*** Meaning, not only was the Savior's atonement required, but also the apostles and all the other righteous men, such as John the Baptist, laying down their lives for their testimony—***that*** gave them enough spiritual power to go back to Heaven and now cast Satan permanently out of it. Once again, the plain reading of this makes complete sense and is in complete chronological order, while a "pre-earth" life martyrdom explanation makes absolutely zero sense...

**Back to Revelation 12**

**12** And after these things I heard another voice saying, Woe to the inhabiters of the earth, yea, and they who dwell upon the islands of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

Satan was wroth because he knew he didn't have much time left now. This, once again, makes much more sense post Jesus Christ and the apostles than it does pre-earth. Also, the plain reading, once again, tells us that Satan was cast down with his followers to Earth, ***and man was already here***—"the devil is come down ***unto you—the inhabiters of the earth."*** Meaning, this casting of Satan permanently out of heaven didn't occur (in fact, couldn't have occurred according to the scriptures) until ***after man was on the earth.***

**Back to Revelation 12**

**13** For when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child.

We know that the woman (Christ's Church) disappeared into apostasy in verse 5, so for Satan to now, once again, be attacking the woman, what does this mean? It means that the woman has to have come out of the wilderness.

**Doctrine and Covenants 33**

> **5** And verily, verily, I say unto you, that this church have I established ***and called forth out of the wilderness.***

So we now have the restoration of the Church, i.e., the woman being called out of the wilderness and Satan attacking it.

**D&C 33:5. How Has the Church Been Called out of the Wilderness?**

> This imagery is drawn from the book of Revelation where the Church of Jesus Christ, symbolized as a woman, is driven into the wilderness, or apostasy, by the great dragon who is Satan (see Revelation 12:5). Therefore, to call the Church from out of the wilderness refers to the Resto-

ration of the Church upon the earth after centuries of apostasy ***[1260 years later]***.

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 68)

The woman being driven into the wilderness was the Great Apostasy (1260 years), and the Restoration was the woman coming out of the wilderness. Simple! Now that we have this understanding under our belt, we should read what it says in the Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual about the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares, as it will help reaffirm what has already been taught, while also prepping us for the next verses in Revelation 12.

**D&C 86:1–7. The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares**

When Jesus first gave the parable of the wheat and the tares (see Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43), He interpreted most the details in the parable.

1. The man sowing seed is the Son of Man (Jesus).
2. The field is the world.
3. The good seed are the children of the kingdom (followers of Jesus).
4. The tares are children of the wicked one (those who follow the enticements of Satan).
5. The enemy is the devil.
6. The harvest is the end of the world.
7. The reapers are the angels sent to reap the field.
8. The tares bound and burned are the evil ones separated out and cast into fire (punishment) at the Judgment.
9. The wheat gathered into the barn represents the righteous who are separated out and made to "shine forth" in the kingdom of the Father.

The Lord did not interpret the following details in Matthew 13:

1. The wheat springing forth and starting to bear fruit.
2. The men sleeping.
3. The wheat and tares being allowed to grow together until the harvest.
4. The wheat being uprooted in an attempt to weed out the tares.

In Doctrine and Covenants 86, the Lord explains these additional details and gives more information on the first details:

1. The field is the world (see v. 2).
2. The Apostles are the sowers of the seed (see v. 2). President Joseph Fielding Smith explained: "In Matthew's account the Lord declares that he is the sower of the good seed, and in the Doctrine and Covenants it is stated that the apostles were the sowers of the seed. There is no contradiction here. Christ is the author of our salvation and he it was who instructed the apostles, and under him they were sent to preach the Gospel unto all the world, or to sow the seed, and as the seed is his and it is sown under his command, he states but the fact in this revelation and also in the parable." (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 1:353.)
3. Falling asleep implies the death of the original Apostles (see D&C 86:3).
4. The enemy is Babylon (see v. 3), the great whore, which is elsewhere called the great and abominable church (see 1 Nephi 13:4–8). Babylon is a symbol of worldliness and evil, and therefore may be said to represent the devil's power in this world. Those who remain in Babylon are those who follow the practices of the world and who do not accept the word of the Lord. Sometimes Satan's persecution of the Church takes the form of aggressive persecution, such as killing the prophets or physically abusing the Saints. More often the persecution consists of social pressure against the humble followers of Christ. Those in the "great and spacious building" in Lehi's dream mocked those who were pressing forward to partake of the fruit of the tree of life, and many became ashamed and fell away (see 1 Nephi 8:27–33).
5. The tares (see D&C 86:4) represent evil doctrines and those who spread them. "Traditionally, tares have been identified with the darnel weed, a species of bearded rye-grass which closely resembles wheat in the early growth period and which is found in modern Palestine. This weed has a bitter taste; if eaten in any appreciable amount, either separately or when mixed with bread, it causes dizziness and often acts as a violent emetic." (McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 1:296.)

   President Joseph Fielding Smith pointed out that "even in the Church the tares are to be found. It is the tares which are to be gathered up and burned from all over the world, but those in the Church will also be gathered out and find their place in the fire. [See D&C 112:23–26.] The Savior also bore witness of [this. When] speaking to the Nephites he said: 'For it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from my people, O house of Israel.' (3 Nephi 21:20.)" (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 1:354.)

   False doctrines or individuals who present themselves as faithful members of the Church but are in reality servants of Satan are a source of temptation to the faithful and tend to choke or corrupt the word of God, or the good seed that is sown.
6. The Church being driven into the wilderness (see D&C 86:3) represents the time of the Apostasy. When the tares (the evil in the Church) grew to maturity, the result was apostasy. The wilderness represents the period of time when the Church and the priesthood were taken from the earth (see Revelation 12:12–17).
7. The tenderness of the wheat is explained in Doctrine and Covenants 86:6 as weakness, or newness, in the faith. When this revelation was given in December 1832, the Church was not yet three years old and was, therefore, still very "tender." At that time many of the tares were not yet identifiable, and attempts to systematically root out those who would eventually prove themselves to be tares would have been very destructive.
8. As in Matthew, the reapers are identified as the angels of God (see D&C 86:5). But the Lord also indicates that at the time this revelation was given, the angels were anxiously awaiting permission to carry out their mission. (Notes and Commentary on D&C 86:5 discusses the time when that permission was given.)
9. The harvest and the burning of the tares (see v. 7) was explained by the Prophet Joseph Smith: "The harvest and the end of the world have an allusion directly to the human family in the last days. … As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world; that is, as the servants of God go forth warning the nations, both priests and people, and as they harden their hearts and reject the light of truth—these first being delivered over to the buffetings of Satan, and the law and the testimony being closed up, as it was in the case of the Jews—they are left in darkness, and delivered over unto the day of burning; thus, being bound up by their creeds, and their bands being made strong by their priests, [they] are prepared for the fulfillment of the saying of the Savior—'The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.' We understand that the work of gathering together of the wheat into barns, or garners, is to take place while the tares are being bound over, [in preparation] for the day of burning, that after the day of burnings, the righteous shall shine forth like the sun, in the Kingdom of their Father." (*Teachings,* p. 101.)

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), pp. 189–190)

**Orson Pratt** taught more of this gathering and separation (Chapter 6 in The Marvelous Work and Wonder):

> ...the Gentile believers will gather to Zion; and because of your testimony, all the elect of God, of whatever nation, tongue, and people, will be gathered out year after year; and by-and-by, the great and last gathering will be done through instrumentality of angels. There will be two, as it were, grinding at a mill; the faithful one will be taken, and the other will be left: there will be two, as it were, sleeping in one bed; one will be picked up by the angels, and the other will be left; and the remnant of the children of God scattered abroad on all the face of the earth will receive their last gathering by the angels.
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 7, Discourse 29, p. 188)

Three important quotes from **Joseph Smith** to help us understand this clearer and wrap it altogether:

> Men and angels are to be co-workers in bringing to pass this great work, and Zion is to be ***prepared,*** even a new Jerusalem, for the elect that are to be gathered from the four quarters of the earth, and to be established an holy city, for the tabernacle of the Lord shall be with them.
>
> ("The Glorious Resurrection," *TPJS,* p. 84)

> The Kingdom of God is like a grain of mustard seed. The mustard seed is small, but brings forth a large tree, and the fowls lodge in the branches. The fowls are the angels. Thus angels come down, combine together to gather their children, and gather them. We cannot be made perfect without them, nor they without us; when these things are done, the Son of Man will descend, the Ancient of Days sit; we may come to an innumerable company of angels, have communion with and receive instruction from them. Paul told about Moses' proceedings; spoke of the children of Israel being baptized. (1 Cor. 10:1–4.) He knew this, and that all the ordinances and blessings were in the Church. Paul had these things, and we may have the fowls of heaven lodge in the branches, etc.
>
> ("We Cannot Be Perfect Without Our Dead," *TPJS,* p. 159)

> Take away the Book of Mormon and the revelations, and where is our religion? We have none; for without Zion, and a place of deliverance, we must fall; because the time is near when the sun will be darkened, and the moon turn to blood, and the stars fall from the heaven, and the earth reel to and fro. Then, if this is the case, and if we are not sanctified and gathered to the places God has appointed, with all our former professions and our great love for the Bible, we must fall; we cannot stand; we cannot be saved; for God will gather out his Saints from the Gentiles, and then comes desolation and destruction, and none can escape except the pure in heart who are gathered.—DHC 2:52.
>
> ("Importance of Revelation," *TPJS,* p. 71)

Angels (symbolized by fowls, birds, etc.) are gathering people to the garner, the New Jerusalem, but the trumpets have not blown yet; the angels are preparing themselves to blow. We should be familiar with these points by now, so this next verse should jump off the page:

**Back to Revelation 12**

**14** Therefore, to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might flee into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

The woman is the Church, which gives birth to "the Kingdom of God," but where is "her place"? It is New Jerusalem. What are the two wings that are given to allow the woman to do this? These are the angels who Joseph Smith taught will be coworkers in that work, moving the elect into the garner (i.e., New Jerusalem) and bundling up the tares to be burned. The two wings could represent all these angels collectively, like the fowls in the Parable of the Mustard Seed, but they could also mean specifically Joseph and Hyrum Smith, i.e., the two wings, which will lead the redemption of Zion and the woman into her place (just like the two cherubim which guard the Ark).

**Matthew 24**

> **28** And now I shew unto you a parable: Behold, wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together; so likewise shall mine elect be gathered from the four quarters of the earth.

**Back to Revelation 12**

**15** And the serpent casteth out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

**16** And the earth helpeth the woman, and the earth openeth her mouth, and swalloweth up the flood which the dragon casteth out of his mouth.

We know that the Assyrian will get "even to the neck" of New Jerusalem. We also know that "floods" here most likely represents people, as water in visions and parables often tends to. (See *Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), "A Voice of Warning to the Wicked," "(Isaiah 13–23). Isaiah 21:1–2." See also Revelation 17:15.)

Satan sends floods of people to try to take down the woman in her place, i.e., the New Jerusalem, but there is ***"an*** earthquake" (or as it is written here, "the earth opened her mouth and swallowed"). This fits the time period of:

**Revelation 6**

> **12** And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was ***a great earthquake***
>
> **14** ... ***and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.***

**Finishing Revelation 12**

**17** Therefore, the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

**Doctrine and Covenants 45**

> **65** And with one heart and with one mind, gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you.
>
> **66** And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God;
>
> **67** And the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion.
>
> **68** ***And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety.***
>
> **69** And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another.
>
> **70** And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore we cannot stand.
>
> **71** And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations, and shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy.

Meaning, every man who will not flee to Zion must take up his sword to fight against his neighbor. Meaning, at this time Satan knows he can't get to New Jerusalem, so he goes after all of the members worldwide who, for whatever reason, aren't in the New Jerusalem.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> ***I prophesy, that that man who tarries after he has an opportunity of going, will be afflicted by the devil.*** Wars are at hand; we must not de-

> lay; but are not required to sacrifice. We ought to have the building up of Zion as our greatest object. When wars come, we shall have to flee to Zion. The cry is to make haste. The last revelation says, Ye shall not have time to have gone over the earth, until these things come. It will come as did the cholera, war, fires, and earthquakes; one pestilence after another, until the Ancient of Days comes, then judgment will be given to the Saints.
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 160–161)

The time is soon coming when no man will have any peace but in Zion and her stakes.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> I saw men hunting the lives of their own sons, and brother murdering brother, women killing their own daughters, and daughters seeking the lives of their mothers. I saw armies arrayed against armies. I saw blood, desolation, fires. The Son of Man has said that the mother shall be against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother. These things are at our doors. They will follow the Saints of God from city to city. Satan will rage, and the spirit of the devil is now enraged. I know not how soon these things will take place; but with a view of them, shall I cry peace? No! I will lift up my voice and testify of them. How long you will have good crops, and the famine be kept off, I do not know; when the fig tree leaves, know then that summer is nigh at hand.
>
> (*History of the Church,* 3:390–91.)

Revelation 12, with this plain chronological reading, has covered Revelation chapters 1–7 chronologically, exactly, in vision form. There have been no breaks or back-and-forths or scattered ideas and timelines. It is one fluid vision that summarizes Revelation chapters 1–7. The next chapters of Revelation, chapters 13 and 14, summarize the events from Revelation chapters 7–11. Let's continue.

## Revelation Chapter 13

*John sees fierce-looking beasts that represent degenerate earthly kingdoms controlled by Satan—The devil works miracles and deceives men.*

**1** And I saw another sign, in the likeness of the kingdoms of the earth; …

In Revelation Chapter 12, John says he saw a sign in heaven in the likeness of things on the earth, and here in chapter 13 he says that he saw ***another sign,*** this time in the likeness of ***the kingdoms of the earth.*** If you believe that Chapter 12 dealt with the pre-earth life, you'd also have to say that chapter 13 deals with the pre-earth life. Hint: it doesn't.

The vision that John saw in chapter 12 was in the likeness of things on the earth, not the pre-earth life. And in chapter 13, these images deal specifically with the kingdoms on the earth, not kingdoms in the pre-earth life. People seem to understand this with chapter 13, but they lose their minds with chapter 12, despite the fact that the language is literally identical.

**Back to Revelation 13**

**1** … a beast rise up out of the sea, and he stood upon the sand of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

We know that after the 7th seal has been opened in heaven, bad things transpire (the seven trumpets), including the gathering of the wicked to be destroyed eventually at the Mount of Olives. What John is shown here is the means by which the wicked are gathered to be destroyed. We are also shown the dragon being wroth and going after the remnant of the woman's seed, which are the Saints worldwide who, for whatever reason, are not in the New Jerusalem. This culminates in the three great woes.

**Revelation 17**

> **8** The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and ***shall ascend out of the bottomless pit,*** and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

**Revelation 9**

> **1** And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to the angel was given the key of ***the bottomless pit.***
>
> **2** And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.
>
> **12** One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.
>
> **13** And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,
>
> **14** Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in ***the bottomless pit.***
>
> **15** And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.
>
> **16** And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

So the army that John is shown coming out of the bottomless pit in these verses is the army of the beast kingdom; it is one in the same, as they were both identified as coming from the same bottomless pit. During that hour + day + month + year when this army is slaying the third part of man—that is when the mark of the beast is implemented, as we will read.

**Back to Revelation 13**

**2** And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

In here John identifies that the beast kingdom is comprised of the several parts of the beast kingdoms that Daniel saw in the past.

**(28-37) Daniel 7:4–8. What Is the Connection between the Four Beasts and Historical Events?**

As mentioned in Daniel 7:17, the four beasts represented "four kings [or kingdoms] which shall arise out of the earth." The first, which was like a lion with eagles' wings, represented the ***Babylonian kingdom*** under Nebuchadnezzar. The lion and eagle are both supreme among beasts of their class. The head of gold in the dream of chapter 2 can be similarly compared. "What the gold is among metals and the head among the members of the body, that the lion is among beasts and the eagle among birds" (Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary*, 9:3:223). The plucking of feathers (see Daniel 7:4) seems to have represented a deprivation of power to fly or the power to dominate and conquer. The change that gave it a man's heart is evidently a reference to the humanizing effect of Nebuchadnezzar's madness (see Daniel 4:34–37).

The second beast (see Daniel 7:2) represented the ***Median-Persian Empire,*** as did the breast and arms of silver in the image of chapter 2. The bear was considered next to the lion as the strongest among animals by the people of the ancient Middle East. The raising up on one side could represent the raising of the forefeet of the bear (standing on its hind feet) as when it goes after prey. "The Medo-Persian bear, as such, has … two sides: the one, the Median side, is at rest after the efforts made for the erection of the world-kingdom; but the other, the Persian side, raises itself up, and then becomes not only higher than the first, but also is prepared for new rapine." (Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary,* 9:3:225.) The ribs held between the bear's teeth and its devouring

"much flesh" (Daniel 7:5) signify the ferocity with which its dominion would be exerted.

The third kingdom corresponded to the ***Greek Empire*** of Alexander the Great. Wings signify power to move and extend influence. Heads signify governing power or the seat of government. The Grecian kingdom was extended greatly under Alexander and had power over much of the earth.

The fourth beast was not likened to an animal. It was, however, very strong and dreadful and broke into pieces the remains of the former kingdoms. It represented the ***Roman Empire*** and the forces of evil that were manifest through that empire. The ten horns are the kingdoms into which the Roman Empire was afterwards divided. They are similar to the ten toes of the great image described in Daniel 2. (See also Daniel 7:23–24.)

Though each of these beasts may be said to represent the worldly kingdoms mentioned, the representation probably was not just of their political dominion, but also of the evils upheld and perpetrated upon the world by their rule. The vision should not be thought of as wholly political, either, particularly in view of the "little horn" (v. 8). This symbol cannot be positively identified with any specific individual or kingdom of the world [today], but seems to be similar to the "beast [rising] out of the sea" that John saw (Revelation 13:1), which also made "war with the saints" (Revelation 13:7) as did this form (see Daniel 7:21–22, 25). The little horn represented a notable anti-Christ power that was to be raised up after the time of the Roman Empire, and it was to be different from the other ten kingdoms mentioned after the Roman kingdom. Daniel said that this horn would have power to make war with and hinder the Saints until the time of Christ's Second Coming (see Daniel 7:20–27).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), "Daniel: Prophet of God, Companion of Kings," pp. 304–305)

Meaning, the lion parts are Babylon, the bear parts are Media-Persia, etc., and the little horn is tied to this beast kingdom conglomerate of John in Revelation. This beast kingdom conglomerate is now identified as the beast kingdom, which will be unleashed from the bottomless pit, and its army will be the one killing everyone and will be at the Battle of Armageddon (thus this entity is responsible for gathering the wicked to be destroyed). This should perk up your ears after reading the previous *Understanding Revelation* chapter, because if this holds true, the participants listed in the Battle of Armageddon should be one and the same: Babylon (modern-day Iraq), plus the Median-Persian Empire (modern-day Iran), the Greek Empire (modern-day Greece and Turkey), etc.

Meaning, John sees the beast kingdom conglomerate, and this beast kingdom conglomerate is the kingdom responsible for the army that will be at Armageddon. We know from other prophets the armies that will be at Armageddon. Ergo, the several parts of the beast kingdom conglomerate, which we have gone over in the Old Testament Student Manual, should be synonymous with, or closely related to, the identified participants in the Battle of Armageddon by other prophets. These two things coinciding or confirming each other would provide a second witness to the identifying of the participants in the Battle of Armageddon.

Turning to Enrichment I in the Old Testament Student Manual:

**(I-4) Armageddon: The Participants**

Ezekiel and Jeremiah indicated areas that will be involved [in the Battle of Armageddon] and named Israel as the target of the war:

1. Ezekiel named Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Meshech and Tubal, as the leader of the forces that would come against Israel (see Ezekiel 38:1–3). Magog, Meshech, and Tubal were ancient peoples in the northern part of Asia Minor (see Notes and Commentary on Ezekiel 38:2–6). *Gog* is a symbolic name for the leader or leaders of this great evil power that will arise in the last days.
2. Ezekiel named Persia, Ethiopia, Libya, Gomer, and Togarmah as being in alliance with Gog (see Ezekiel 38:2–6; see also Notes and Commentary on Ezekiel 38:2–6 and the Bible Dictionary). These designations refer to general areas of the ancient world…
3. The prophets agreed that all [these] nations should be joined in this alliance in one way or another (see Jeremiah 25:26; Joel 3:1; Zechariah 14:2; Revelation 16:14).

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), "The Battle of Armageddon: A Prophetic View," p. 292)

If you look at these areas today—from modern Turkey to modern Syria to modern Iran to modern Iraq to modern Egypt, etc.—what do all of these countries have in common?

In the New Testament Student Manual for **"Revelation 13:1–7. John 'Saw a Beast Rise Out of the Sea,'"** we learn of six characteristics that will help us identify this nation:

1. It had power over many nations (see Revelation 13:1, 7);
2. It opposed God and blasphemed against Him (see verses 5–6);
3. The power it wielded was like the power that predatory animals have over their prey (see verse 2);
4. Satan gave it power (see verses 2, 4);
5. People of the world worshipped or followed the beast (see verse 4); and
6. It was able to overpower many, including the Saints (see verse 7).

(See *New Testament Student Manual* (2018), "Chapter 55: Revelation 12–16")

It seems clear that this is more than just a government or a nation, this is ***a religion*** that runs the government and/or nations. It is not a coincidence that today, this is commonly called "the ***nation*** of Islam." The religion of Islam comes complete with political and governance power ***built into the religion.***

We learn in later chapters in Revelation that the whore of all the earth—the great and abominable church, Babylon the great, etc.—mounts this beast kingdom; meaning, it has power over, or an ability to exercise dominion or influence over, the beast kingdom. However, the beast ***hates the whore.*** We know that the whore, the great and abominable church, is tied directly to Gentile nations, Gentile culture, Gentile idolatry, and potentially more specifically, "Rome" herself. As soon as the beast has the power, it takes out the city Babylon the great immediately.

**Revelation 17**

**16** And the ten horns which thou sawest upon ***the beast,*** these ***shall hate the whore,*** and ***shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.***

**17** For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

**18** And ***the woman*** which thou sawest ***is that great city,*** which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

Note the relationship between Islamic nations and Rome (i.e. "Christianity," or the perceived head of it).

**Back to Revelation 13**

**3** And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

**4** And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

**5** And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue ***forty and two months.***

It's important to read these three verses together, because the "forty and two months" in verse 5 identifies that we've entered into that part of the second woe (remember, this is the 3.5 years when the two prophets prophesy and hold off this army). Why is this important to note? Because it gives us a point of reference for verses 3 and 4, in that this head is wounded ***before*** the 3.5 years start but ***after*** the bottomless pit is opened. This means that the most likely time period for this head to be wounded is during the "one hour + one day + one month + one year" in which a third part of men are killed.

**Back to Revelation 13**

**6** And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and ***his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.***

**7** And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

**8** And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

**9** If any man have an ear, let him hear.

It's important to note that this destroying force is only able to make war against the Saints who are "the remnant" identified in Revelation Chapter 12, meaning those ***outside*** of the New Jerusalem. We've already learned that this army and this anti-Christ are given to slay "the third part of men," meaning that this kingdom is not literally in charge of every country on the planet. He is not affecting, controlling, etc. every country on the planet—just the third part.

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

> "All the world wondered after the beast," Nebuchadnezzar and Constantine the Great not excepted. And if the beast was all the world, how could the world wonder after the beast? It must have been a wonderful beast to cause all human beings to wonder after it; and I will venture to say that when God allows the old devil to give power to the beast to destroy the inhabitants of the earth, all will wonder. Verse 4 reads, "And they worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying. Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"
>
> Some say it means the kingdom of the world. One thing is sure, it does not mean the kingdom of the Saints. Suppose we admit that it means the kingdoms of the world, what propriety would there be in saying, Who is able to make war with my great big self? If these spiritualized interpretations are true, the book contradicts itself in almost every verse. But they are not true.
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 293)

Joseph Smith, when teaching about this, clarified the very same thing—obviously the beast kingdom won't comprise ***the entire world*** or be ruling over ***the entire world,*** for "the world shall wonder after the beast" (Revelation 13:3). Meaning, the beast isn't wondering after himself saying, "who is able to make war with me, my big great self?!" Speculating over what "this third part" is, is just that, speculation. That said however, we know that this entity is attacking primarily the Gentiles—the whore of all the earth, Babylon, etc.—and we know that the Gentiles make up a "third part" of the people of the world when the Lord breaks up prophetic last-day events: Jew, Gentile, and Heathen.

It is also important to note at this time that they are blaspheming the Lord, His tabernacle, and those in heaven. Why is that important? Because the Lord, ***His tabernacle,*** is currently in the New Jerusalem, and the City of Enoch is now visibly seen in the sky (in heaven) returning to Earth. This anti-Christ is mocking and making a blasphemy ***of all of them.*** The reason why this army is destroying Gentiles, and eventually Jerusalem, is because it can't get to the New Jerusalem.

**Doctrine and Covenants 61**

> **14** Behold, I, the Lord, in the beginning blessed the waters; but in the last days, by the mouth of my servant John, I cursed the waters.
>
> **15** Wherefore, the days will come that no flesh shall be safe upon the waters.
>
> **16** And it shall be said in days to come that none is able to go up to the land of Zion upon the waters, but he that is upright in heart.

The Saints that this entity "overcome[s]" at this time are ones, once again, who ***are not*** in the New Jerusalem. And that brings us to the names written in the Lamb's book of life, for whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life? Those in the New Jerusalem. Those who have obtained the promise, the Power of the Lamb, etc. (See "Joseph's Boys; A Remnant of Jacob.")

**Revelation 13:8. "The Book of Life"**

> John saw that the beast would be worshipped by those "whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb" (Revelation 13:8). **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** explained that "the book of life, or Lamb's book of Life, is the record kept in heaven which contains the names of the faithful and an account of their righteous covenants and deeds. (D. & C. 128:6–7; Ps. 69:28; Rev. 3:5; 21:27.)" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 3:455). **President Joseph Fielding Smith** (1876–1972) taught: "We are not going to be saved in the kingdom of God just because our names are on the records of the Church. It will require more than that. We will have to have our names written in the Lamb's Book of Life, and if they are written in the Lamb's Book of Life then it is an evidence we have kept the commandments. Every soul who will not keep those commandments shall have his name blotted out of that book" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1950, 10; see also Alma 5:57–58).
>
> (*New Testament Student Manual* (2018), "Chapter 55: Revelation 12–16")

**3 Nephi 24**

> **16** Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard; and ***a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.***
>
> **17** ***And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.***
>
> **18** Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

**Back to Revelation 13**

**10** He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

Even though they are killing and pillaging, the reminder is that these people will eventually be destroyed, and those who take up the sword to fight, vs. fleeing to New Jerusalem, are guaranteed no protection. This verse is very similar to the verse found in Isaiah 10:11. The patience and faithfulness of the Saints will be made manifest during this time period, a day of blood. We will get further clarification in Revelation Chapter 14:12–13.

**Back to Revelation 13**

**11** And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

**12** And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

**13** And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

**14** And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

**15** And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

**16** And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

**17** And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

**18** Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

Based off of the placement of these verses, it makes it clear that the mark of the beast is directly tied to this anti-Christ, this "king" over the bottomless pit. Which means that the mark of the beast won't show up until the army shows up, meaning the second woe. Meaning, this mark of the beast is part of the second woe. Speculating about the mark of the beast is just that, speculation, but what do we ***know*** about it?

1. It is an image made after the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live
2. Power was given unto this image to speak (it had words written on the image)
3. Power was given to kill all those who would not worship the image
4. All under the anti-Christ must obtain the mark on their right hand or forehead, or they cannot buy and sell

Before we get into the next chapter, let's do a quick recap: Chapter 12 ends with the vision of the woman being safe in her place, the New Jerusalem, and then the dragon being wroth and attacking the remnants worldwide—those worldwide who, for whatever reason, are not in the New Jerusalem. Chapter 13 immediately goes into explaining the how—how Satan will be doing this attacking—and that is with those from the bottomless pit. We then get the "who," or the breakdown of this group and the anti-Christ. This is how, once again, the wicked will be gathered to be destroyed.

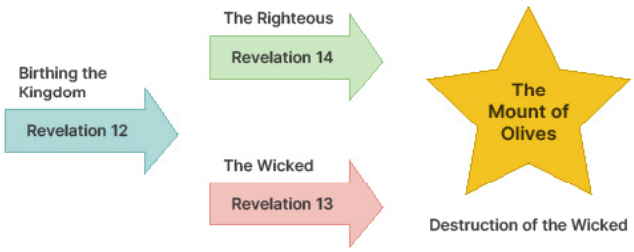
Some questions the righteous might have after ending Chapter 13 might be,

"How will God save the day and destroy this force?"

Or

"How will the Lord gather His people?"

Chapter 14 goes over just that. The climax of which takes us right back to Chapter 11 of Revelation, the Mount of Olives, once again! Meaning, this summary brings us right to where we should be. A visual representation of these chapters would look like this:




**Doctrine and Covenants 87**

**4** And it shall come to pass, after many days, slaves shall rise up against their masters, who shall be marshaled and disciplined for war.

**5** ***And it shall come to pass also*** that the remnants who are left of the land will marshal themselves, and shall become exceedingly angry, and shall vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation.

**1 Nephi 14**

**7** For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men; a work which shall be everlasting, ***either on the one hand or on the other—either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds unto their being brought down into captivity, and also into destruction, both temporally and spiritually, according to the captivity of the devil, of which I have spoken.***

**Brother Hyrum Andrus**

We read this afternoon from page 231 of the Teachings that the Prophet Joseph said there are 3 gatherings—the gathering of the Saints to Zion, the gathering of the Jews, and then the wicked will also be gathered together to be destroyed. And where are they gathered? To Jerusalem, and there they will be destroyed...

"The building up of Zion is a cause that has interested the people of God in every age; it is a theme upon which prophets, priests and kings have dwelt with peculiar delight; they have looked forward with joyful anticipation to the day in which we live; and fired with heavenly and joyful anticipations they have sung and written and prophesied of this our day; but they died without the sight; we are the favored people that God has made choice of to bring about the Latter-day glory; it is left for us to see, participate in and help to roll forward the Latter-day glory, 'the dispensation of the fulness of times, when God will gather together all things that are in heaven, and all things that are upon the earth,' 'even in one,' when the Saints of God will be gathered in one from every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue, when the Jews will be gathered together into one, the wicked will also be gathered together to be destroyed, as spoken of by the prophets; the Spirit of God will also dwell with His people, and be withdrawn from the rest of the nations, and all things whether in heaven or on earth will be in one, even in Christ. The heavenly Priesthood will unite with the earthly, to bring about those great purposes; and whilst we are thus united in one common cause, to roll forth the kingdom of God, the heavenly Priesthood are not idle spectators, the Spirit of God will be showered down from above, and it will dwell in our midst. The blessings of the Most High will rest upon our tabernacles, and our name will be handed down to future ages; our children will rise up and call us blessed; and generations yet unborn will dwell with peculiar delight upon the scenes that we have passed through, the privations that we have endured; the untiring zeal that we have manifested; the all but insurmountable difficulties that we have overcome in laying the foundation of a work that brought about the glory and blessing which they will realize; a work that God and angels have contemplated with delight for generations past; that fired the souls of the ancient patriarchs and prophets; a work that is destined to bring about the destruction of the powers of darkness, the renovation of the earth, the glory of God, and the salvation of the human family" (*TPJS,* p. 231).

...When the wicked gather against Jerusalem, they will be gathered by Satanic power. See, when Zion rises in glory and there's the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night among the righteous, then the Lord allows the adversary a commensurate degree of power, or the right to exercise that. And when the wicked are to be gathered, they will be gathered by Satanic power, bringing them against Jerusalem. And they will gather them in the "great day of God Almighty."

("Lecture 18: The Great Harvest Season of the Last Days Part 2")

You will notice (or should notice) that most of the things the "anti-Christ" does, sound eerily familiar to what we know Joseph Smith Jr. will do—with the Redemption of Zion, building of New Jerusalem,

the uniting of the heavenly with the earthly, the return of the ten tribes, etc. After the Marvelous Work and Wonder roles forward, we will witness the anti-Christ rise to power as Brother Hyrum Andrus wonderfully explained. The two groups will be parallel to one another, with them coming to heads at the Mt. of Olives and the wicked being destroyed. That event makes the "End of the Times of the Gentiles."

**Doctrine and Covenants 133**

> **12** Let them, therefore, who are among the Gentiles flee unto Zion.
>
> **13** And let them who be of Judah flee unto Jerusalem, unto the mountains of the Lord's house.

**D&C 133:12–13. Zion and Jerusalem As Places of Gathering**

> "The Gentiles who obeyed the Gospel were commanded (v. 12) to gather in Zion, and those of the house of Judah were to flee to Jerusalem (v. 13). This is in harmony with the prediction of Isaiah and Micah, that out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. For from both these centers the Lord shall judge. Jerusalem shall be rebuilt and become a holy city, the capital for Judah, and Zion shall be the capital and city of our God, for Ephraim and his fellows. Both shall be seats of government in unison with each other, and the Lord shall dwell in both." (Smith and Sjodahl, *Commentary,* p. 841.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 339)

**Elder Orson Pratt**

> Then many of the Jews …will gather to Jerusalem in unbelief…and because of your testimony, the Gentile believers will gather to Zion…
>
> So great will be the darkness resting upon [the wicked], and so great the bonds of priestcraft with which they will be bound, that they will not understand, and they will be given up to the hardness of their hearts. Then will be fulfilled that saying, That the day shall come when the Lord shall have power over his Saints, and the Devil shall have power over his own dominion. He will give them up to the power of the Devil, and he will have power over them, and he will carry them about as chaff before a whirlwind. He will gather up millions upon millions of people into the valleys around about Jerusalem in order to destroy the Jews after they have gathered. How will the Devil do this? He will perform miracles to do it. The Bible says the kings of the earth and the great ones will be deceived by these false miracles. It says there shall be three unclean spirits that shall go forth working miracles, and they are spirits of devils. Where do they go? To the kings of the earth; and what will they do? Gather them up to battle unto the great day of God Almighty. Where? Into the valley of Armageddon. And where is that? On the east side of Jerusalem.
>
> When he gets them gathered together, they do not understand any of these things; but they are given up to that power that deceived them, by miracles that had been performed, to get them to go into that valley to be destroyed. Joel, Zephaniah, Zechariah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and nearly all of the ancient Prophets have predicted that the nations shall be gathered up against Jerusalem, in the valley of Jehoshaphat and the valley of Megiddo—that there the Lord shall fight for his people, and smite the horse and his rider, and send plagues on these armies, and their flesh shall be consumed from their bones, and their eyes from their sockets. They will actually fulfil these prophecies, with all their pretension to [religion] and prophetic learning.
>
> But the Latter-day Saints are not in darkness; they are the children of light, although many of us will actually be asleep. We shall have to wake up and trim up our lamps, or we shall not be prepared to enter in; for we shall all slumber and sleep in that day, and some will have gone to sleep from which they will not awake until they awake up in darkness without any oil in their lamps. But, as a general thing, the Saints will understand the signs of the times, if they do lie down and get to sleep. Others have their eyes closed upon the prophecies of the ancient Prophets; and not only that, but they are void of the spirit of prophecy themselves. When a man has this, though he may appeal to ancient Prophets to get understanding on some subjects he does not clearly understand, yet, as he has the spirit of prophecy in himself, he will not be in darkness; he will have a knowledge of the signs of the times; he will have a knowledge of the house of Israel, and of Zion, of the ten tribes, and of many things and purposes and events that are to take place on the earth; and he will see coming events, and can say such an event will take place, and after that another, and then another; and after that the trumpet shall sound, and after that certain things will take place, and then another trump shall sound, &c., &c.; and he will have his eye fixed on the signs of the times, and that day will not overtake him unawares; but upon the nations it will come as a thief upon the mighty men and upon the chief captains, who will gather up their hosts upon the mountains, hills, and valleys of Palestine, to fight against the Jews; and they will be as blind as the dumb ass; and right in the midst of their blindness the Lord will rend the heavens and stand his feet upon the Mount of Olives…
>
> (*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 7, Discourse 29, pp. 187–190)

Revelation chapter 12 dealt with the birthing of The Kingdom of God and placing her "into her place." Revelation chapter 13 dealt with ***the gathering of the wicked,*** while Chapter 14 discusses ***the gathering of the righteous and the destruction of this group of wicked,*** which comes at Jerusalem after the Jews have gathered there (Mount of Olives).

I also included Orson Pratt's quote here because he makes it clear that the Church membership will fall asleep, and the process of them waking up is the beginning of the righteous being gathered out before Babylon is burned (the first trumpet). Orson Pratt also says that in that day there will be members with the spirit of prophecy reading the scriptures who will be able to say "this event will happen, then this event will happen, etc." (i.e. points of reference).

This is important because we learn in the Book of Mormon, in Ether, that when the membership begins to understand and have the Book of Revelation unfolded to them, yea in fine, when the veil of unbelief departs from their eyes, they will know that the events described in Revelation are about to take place in reality. (See "Joseph's Boys: A Remnant of Jacob.")

A quick recap:

1. Saints fall asleep
2. Saints begin to wake up (Joseph's Boys); the cause of this wake up is identified in other locations as the desolating sickness (Isaiah 28)
3. The righteous begin to be gathered and have their eyes opened to the true understanding of doctrine (including the Book of Revelation)
4. The redemption and building of New Jerusalem, the 144,000, Christ appears on Mount Zion
5. The 7th seal is opened in heaven and Babylon is burned (first trumpet)
6. The wicked begin to be gathered and Jews worldwide (from the tribe of Judah) flee to Old Jerusalem
7. The wicked armies of the world gather against Old Jerusalem
8. The wicked are destroyed at Old Jerusalem

So once again, Revelation Chapter 11 takes us up to the redemption of Zion and the building of New Jerusalem. Chapter 13 shows the wicked being gathered and the destruction they cause and how they do it. Chapter 14 deals with what the righteous are doing and the judgements which will come upon the wicked.

## Revelation Chapter 14

*The Lamb will stand upon Mount Zion—The gospel will be restored in the last days by angelic ministry—The Son of Man will harvest the earth.*

**1** And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

**2** And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

**3** And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

**4** These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

**5** And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

Like we identified, this chapter starts at around where Revelation Chapter 12 ended but is showing a different path. What we are seeing here is:

**Revelation Chapter 7**

> **9** After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;
>
> **10** And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.
>
> **11** And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,
>
> **12** Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.
>
> **13** And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?
>
> **14** And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
>
> **15** Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.
>
> **16** They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.
>
> **17** For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.
>
> ***18** And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

This gives us a crystal-clear definition of "virgin" used in Revelation 14:4 as it coincides with Revelation 7:14. Why are they "virgins"? Because they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. This is a reference to purity as pertaining to personal sanctification and the atonement, it has nothing to do with whether a man has had sex or not. Joseph Smith identified men who would be part of that group, all of whom were married. The best and simplest definition of these 144,000 can be found in the Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual Chapter 77:11.

**D&C 77:11. Who Are the 144,000?**

> "Before the Lord shall come … there is to be a great work among the nations. … ***The ten tribes will have to come forth and come to this land,*** to be crowned with glory ***in the midst of Zion*** by the hands of the servants of God, even the Children of Ephraim; and twelve thousand ***High Priests*** will be elected from each of these ten tribes, as well as from the scattered tribes, and sealed in their foreheads, and ***will be ordained*** and receive power to gather out of all nations, kindreds, tongues and people as many as will come unto the general assemblage of the Church of the first-born." (Orson Pratt, in *Journal of Discourses,* 16:325.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 170)

1. Redemption and building of New Jerusalem (for they are returning to Zion)
2. Then ten tribes return to this land
3. High Priests are called (for this calling you have to be married)
4. They are then ordained

These verses (Revelation 14:1–5) have a footnote that takes you to:

**Doctrine and Covenants 133**

> **18** When the Lamb shall stand upon Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having his Father's name written on their foreheads.

**D&C 133:13. What Does the Phrase "Mountains of the Lord's House" Mean?**

> **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** explained that the phrase has more than one meaning:
>
> "The *mountain of the Lord's house* is the mountain where the temple of God is built. [Isaiah 2:2–3 quoted; see also Micah 4:1–2; 2 Nephi 12:2–3.]
>
> "This great prophecy, as is often the case, is subject to the law of multiple fulfilment. 1. In Salt Lake City and other mountain locations temples, in the full and true sense of the word, have been erected, and representatives of all nations are flowing unto them to learn of God and his ways. … 2. ***But the day is yet future when the Lord's house is to be built on that 'Mount Zion' which is 'the city of New Jerusalem' in Jackson County, Missouri.*** (D. & C. 84:2–4.) Mount Zion, itself, will be the mountain of the Lord's house in the day when that glorious temple is erected. 3. When the Jews flee unto Jerusalem, it will be 'unto the mountains of the Lord's house' (D. & C. 133:13), for a holy temple is to be built there also as part of the work of the great era of restoration. (Ezek. 37:24–28.)
>
> "The law cannot go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, in the full millennial sense that Isaiah foresaw and specified, until these two great future temples are constructed in the old and new Jerusalems." (*Mormon Doctrine,* pp. 517–18.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 339)

**Doctrine and Covenants 101:17–21. Zion and her stakes will be established**

> Despite the Saints' expulsion from Jackson County, Missouri, the Lord reaffirmed that "Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered" (D&C 101:17). ***Although the stakes of Zion have spread over the face of the earth, "the center place," Jackson County, continues to be designated by the Lord as the location for the city of New Jerusalem*** (see D&C 57:1–3; 101:17, 20–21).
>
> **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** (1915–1985) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: "There is no occasion for uncertainty or anxiety about the building up of Zion—meaning the New Jerusalem—in the last days. The Lord once offered his people the chance to build that Zion from which the law shall go forth to all the world. They failed. Why? Because they were unprepared and unworthy, as is yet the case with those of

> us who now comprise the kingdom. When we as a people are prepared and worthy, the Lord will again command us and the work will go forward—on schedule, before the Second Coming, and at the direction of the President of the Church. Until then, none of us need take any personal steps toward gathering to Missouri or preparing for a landed-inheritance there. Let us, rather, learn the great concepts involved and make ourselves worthy for any work the Lord may lay upon us in our day and time. Some things must yet precede the building up of Jackson County" (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 586).
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (2018))

The "voices" in verse two have reference to the build up that we discussed in previous chapters—"the voice of lightning, the voice of thunder, etc." (Revelation 8:5, D&C 88: 90).

The last thing to mention is the song that will be sung—cool side note, we know what the lyrics to that song will be.

**Doctrine and Covenants 84**

> **96** For I, the Almighty, have laid my hands upon the nations, to scourge them for their wickedness.
>
> **97** And plagues shall go forth, and they shall not be taken from the earth until I have completed my work, which shall be cut short in righteousness—
>
> **98** Until all shall know me, who remain, even from the least unto the greatest, and shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and shall see eye to eye, and shall lift up their voice, and with the voice together sing this new song, saying:
>
> **99** The Lord hath brought again Zion;
> The Lord hath redeemed his people, Israel,
> According to the election of grace,
> Which was brought to pass by the faith
> And covenant of their fathers.
>
> **100** The Lord hath redeemed his people;
> And Satan is bound and time is no longer.
> The Lord hath gathered all things in one.
> The Lord hath brought down Zion from above.
> The Lord hath brought up Zion from beneath.
>
> **101** The earth hath travailed and brought forth her strength;
> And truth is established in her bowels;
> And the heavens have smiled upon her;
> And she is clothed with the glory of her God;
> For he stands in the midst of his people.
>
> **102** Glory, and honor, and power, and might,
> Be ascribed to our God; for he is full of mercy,
> Justice, grace and truth, and peace,
> Forever and ever, Amen.

**Back to Revelation 14**

> **6** And I saw ***another angel*** fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,
>
> **7** Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

If this series of events coincides with Revelation Chapter 7 (which it does), that would put these verses in conjunction with:

**Revelation 7**

> **1** And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.
>
> **2** And I saw ***another angel*** ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,
>
> **3** Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

Some people might be getting confused right now because they have heard the angel in Revelation 14:6–7 identified as Moroni and the angel in Revelation 7:1–3 identified as John the Beloved. And others yet might be confused because they've read where Joseph Smith ***identified himself*** as this angel, or "Elias." The confusion arises because of a single false assumption.

**D&C 133:17, 36. Who Was "the Angel Crying through the Midst of Heaven"?**

> The language of this verse is similar to the language of Revelation 14:6–7. **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** wrote:
>
> "Now, as to the actual work of restoration—what angel performed this mighty deed, this work which involves the salvation of all men on earth in these latter-days? Who restored the everlasting gospel? Was it one angel or many?
>
> "It is traditional (and true!) to reply: 'Moroni, son of Mormon, the now resurrected Nephite prophet, who holds the keys of "the stick of Ephraim" (D. & C. 27:5), the one through whose ministry the Book of Mormon was again brought to light.' The reasoning is that the Book of Mormon contains 'the fulness of the everlasting gospel' (D. & C. 135:3); that therein is God's message of salvation for all of earth's inhabitants; and that this gospel message is now being taken by the Lord's witnesses to one nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people after another. ...
>
> "But other angels were yet to come—Moses, Elias, Elijah, Gabriel, Raphael, and 'divers angels, ... all declaring their dispensation, their rights, their keys, their honors, their majesty and glory, and the power of their priesthood; giving line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little.' (D. & C. 128:21.)
>
> "Thus the angel Moroni brought the message, that is, the word; but other angels brought the keys and priesthood, the power. And in the final analysis the fulness of the everlasting gospel consists of all of the truths and powers needed to enable men to gain a fulness of salvation in the celestial heaven." (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,* 3:528–30.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), p. 339)

We know "Elias" is used ***as a title;*** it is not a reference to a single person in and of itself. We know that John the Revelator is ***an Elias who is to restore all things,*** but as we read clearly above, there were/are ***many of these*** Eliases who are involved in the restoration of all things, who personally were involved in restoring keys and authority to Joseph Smith Jr. (John the Revelator was involved in the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood, for example.)

That said however, the only ***"the*** Elias" involved ***in everything,*** or ***who will hold every key dealing with the restoration of all things,*** is Joseph Smith Jr. Period.

Was John the Revelator ***"an*** Elias to restore all things"? Absolutely. Will he yet be involved over in Jerusalem? Absolutely. To what extent? Speculation... What we do know about this angel, however, is what Joseph Smith Jr. said about this angel—that it was he himself.

Eliases to restore all things = Angels (plural) dealing with this time period

*The* Elias to restore all things = Angel flying through the midst of heaven = Joseph Smith Jr.

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

> **92** And ***angels*** shall fly through the midst of heaven, crying with a loud voice, sounding the trump of God, saying: Prepare ye, prepare ye, O inhabitants of the earth; for the judgment of our God is come. Behold, and lo, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

**Revelation 8**

> **2** And I saw the ***seven*** angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.
>
> **3** And ***another angel*** came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.
>
> **4** And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.
>
> **5** And ***the angel*** took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.
>
> **6** And ***the seven angels*** which had the seven trumpets prepared ***themselves*** to sound.

**Doctrine and Covenants 133**

> **17** For behold, the Lord God hath sent forth ***the angel*** crying through the midst of heaven, saying: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight, for the hour of his coming is nigh

You might not agree that Joseph is this angel, this ***"the*** Elias," but you cannot deny that ***Joseph Smith thought and taught himself to be this angel.*** I stand with Joseph Smith Jr. (See "Joseph Smith to Return.")

**Back to Revelation 14**

> **8** And there followed ***another angel,*** saying, ***Babylon*** is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations ***drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.***

**Doctrine and Covenants 88**

> **94** And another angel shall sound his trump, saying: ***That great church, the mother of abominations, that made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication,*** that persecuteth the saints of God, that shed their blood—she who sitteth upon many waters, and upon the islands of the sea—behold, she is the tares of the earth; she is bound in bundles; her bands are made strong, no man can loose them; therefore, she is ***ready to be burned.*** And he shall sound his trump both long and loud, and all nations shall hear it.

**Revelation 8**

> **7** The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was ***burnt up.***

**Back to Revelation 14**

> **9** And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,
>
> **10** The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:
>
> **11** And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

We are now squarely within the time of the "woes." It is important to note that Revelation 11 ends with the second woe ending and ***the pronouncement that the third woe is coming*** but it does not specifically go over it (although we covered it in the breakdown). We then have Chapters 12, 13, and half of 14 that have summarized Chapters 1–11 of Revelation and now we are for the first time being taught plainly what will happen when the third woe comes (Mount of Olives).

Those who have received the mark of the beast are in the holy city of Jerusalem ravaging the city and the two prophets lay dead. On the third day, the prophets who lay dead arise and the third woe gets poured out upon all those who have received the mark of the beast and who are there.

Verses 9–11 are actually a warning of what is about to come coinciding with:

**Revelation 11**

> **14** the second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

**Back to Revelation 14**

> **12** Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.
>
> **13** And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

This hearkens back to what we went over in Revelation 13:7–10: this is the patience of the Saints and all those who died holding true to their testimony of the Savior and not taking upon themselves the mark of the beast during the more than 5 years of the second woe. So the contrast between those that gave in to evil and succumbed and gave up their testimony of the Savior and took upon themselves the mark of the beast (Revelation 14:9–11) is contrasted with those who kept their testimony of the Savior and did not take the mark of the beast (Revelation 14:11–12) even unto death.

**Back to Revelation 14**

> **14** And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.
>
> **15** And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.
>
> **16** And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.
>
> **17** And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.
>
> **18** And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.
>
> **19** And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.
>
> **20** And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

This is the third woe. This is when Christ appears and destroys the armies of Gog and the lands of Magog. This is the event described on page 295 of the Old Testament Student Manual 1 Kings–Malachi Enrichment I:

**(I-8) Armageddon: The Deliverance**

> The judgments of the Lord upon the armies of Gog is known in the scriptures as the great day of the Lord's "sacrifice" (see Isaiah 34:5–6, Ezekiel 39:17–22), the Lord's "controversy with the nations" (Jeremiah 25:31), the "supper of the great God" (Revelation 19:17, see also Revelation 19:18–21), and "the great winepress of the wrath of God" (Revelation 14:19, Revelation 19:15, D&C 133:48–51).
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition, 2003), p. 295)

**D&C 133:46–51. Why Will the Lord Wear Red Clothing at the Second Coming?**

> Wine in Doctrine and Covenants 133:48–51, as in the sacrament, suggests blood, both Christ's blood when He worked out the Atonement alone, and the blood of vengeance on the wicked at the Second Coming (see Isaiah 64:1–6). **President Joseph Fielding Smith** said that "Isaiah has pictured this great day when the Lord shall come with his garments, or apparel, red and glorious, to take vengeance on the ungodly. (Isa. 64:1–6.) This will be a day of mourning to the wicked, but a day of gladness to all who have kept his commandments. Do not let anyone think that this is merely figurative language, it is literal, and as surely as we live that day of wrath will come when the cup of iniquity is full. We have received a great many warnings. The great day of the Millennium will come in; the wicked will be consumed and peace and righteousness will dwell upon all the face of the earth for one thousand years." (*Church History and Modern Revelation,* 1:191–92.)
>
> (*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* (Second edition, 2001), pp. 341–342)

This is yet another testimony that the scriptures and prophecies are not figurative, they will all be fulfilled literally and plainly.

In summary, once again, Revelation Chapters 1–11 take us from the birthing of the Kingdom of God and putting her in "her place," up to the second woe at Old Jerusalem. Chapters 12–14 summarize Chapters 1–11 of Revelation in a poetic, more visual or story-based format (like the 10 virgins), and then it finishes with the third woe (which actually isn't in or described in Chapter 11). Chapter 14 actually gives us the most information about that event that we have had yet in the book of Revelation. So Revelation Chapters 12–14 summarize everything we have learned in the Book of Revelation up to this point, and then as cherry on top, it gives us a visual description of the third woe, the Lord reaping at the great winepress of the Lord at the Mount of Olives.

# SECTION VI

# Brother Andrus + Brother English

*"Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to bring forth the words of the book; and in the mouth of as many witnesses as seemeth him good will he establish his word; and wo be unto him that rejecteth the word of God!"*

*—Isaiah (2 Nephi 27:14)*

*"But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."*

*—Jesus Christ (Matthew 18:16)*

# Prophecies of Nephi

**Taken and adapted from Lecture 7**
**NEPHI'S PROPHECY OF THE LAST DAYS**

The great prophetic picture of the Book of Mormon is far, far more significant than most of us have realized. But even at that, I hesitate at times to talk about it because it comes so close to home at times. And it's not easy to talk about those things in relation to judgments on this land and things that are not too far distant in the future. But as I've wrestled with this situation, struggled over it, ruminated on it and all those other adjectives, my conclusion is, or my feeling is, that we need to have an educated body of Saints in order to best handle the circumstances. So I'm going to give you both barrels, right from the shoulder. And we'll spend 9 hours tonight and tomorrow night and Saturday night talking about the prophetic picture.

1. Help the Saints by trying to educate them and making them uncomfortable, or being held accountable as a watchman on the tower for not raising the alarm but being able to keep more friends in the world by making fewer people uncomfortable?
2. Can you imagine 3 hours each night for three nights in a row coming together, reading scripture and learning of these things? Most members (and that's being generous) can't spend a couple hours pretending to listen to a "spiritual video" in the background before jumping straight to "Moroni 10: 3–5! The Spirit can teach me all things! I don't need study and scriptures!" How I long for the days where such a thing was possible in most stakes… now it is almost exclusively "conferences" where Saints come together to support their favorite "PriestcraftsRUs."

To begin with, let me just say that the major prophetic theme of the Book of Mormon concerning the latter-days concerns an era of warfare against Zion. You take a look at the Book of Mormon and you say, "What are the prophetic themes?" There's one concerning the birth of Christ. There's another concerning the judgments and the miniature millennial era at his crucifixion and resurrection. Those are past, and those are fulfilled within the record itself. The one we're talking about is the one that Nephi gives us initial insight on and the one that Jesus amplifies during his ministry. [S]ome of us take a chronological view from 1 Nephi—"I, Nephi, born of goodly parents…." to Moroni 10. And we look at it from that standpoint.

As you see the message of the Book of Mormon, the message blossoms in Nephi. And then you see another tremendous amplification of it by the Savior. In one manner of speaking the revelations given to Nephi constitute the key, the original, the initial key of insight to the whole thing. As it relates to our day, the Book of Mormon, the major prophetic theme of that sacred volume, concerns an era of warfare against Zion, in which era Zion will be sanctified and rise to be the full standard that the Lord designs the Saints to be.

Then that program that's established among them will eventually be extended to Jerusalem in the great winding-up scene preliminary to the second coming and associated with the second coming. In the warfare against Zion, the great prophetic theme of the Book of Mormon, there are two divisions to it. First of all there is the era of warfare against the Latter-day Saints, or Zion. That's the initial thrust. The second division is the shifting of military tactics from Zion to Jerusalem and the consummating scene in Jerusalem.

So this whole era of warfare that finally consummates in the second coming of Christ, his appearance on the Mount of Olives and his grand world appearance in glory subsequently, shortly after that, then it has these two major divisions, the era of warfare against Zion and the era of warfare against Jerusalem.

1. Warfare against Zion
2. Program of Zion is established in America
3. Program expands out to include old Jerusalem
4. This is "preliminary to the second coming," which by this he means "the Great and Dreadful Day"

1. Warfare against Zion (i.e. "the New Jerusalem")
2. Warfare against Jerusalem (i.e. "Old Jerusalem")

I'd say that he misses here those that will escape early to establish the New Jerusalem.

Let me turn with you now to 1 Nephi 14. Let's start right from the beginning.

"And it shall come to pass, that if the Gentiles," and note the little word "if"—"If the Gentiles shall hearken unto the Lamb of God in that day that he shall manifest himself unto them in word, and also in power, in very deed, unto the taking away of their stumbling blocks—And harden not their hearts against the Lamb of God, they shall be numbered among the seed of thy father;" and that is Lehi. "Yea, they shall be numbered among the house of Israel; and they shall be a blessed people upon the promised land forever."

"They shall be no more brought down into captivity; and the house of Israel shall no more be confounded. And that great pit, which hath been digged for them by that great and abominable church, which was founded by the devil and his children, that he might lead away the souls of men down to hell—yea, that great pit which hath been digged for the destruction of men shall be filled by those who digged it, unto their utter destruction, saith the Lamb of God; not the destruction of the soul, save it be the casting of it into that hell which hath no end.

"For behold, this is according to the captivity of the devil and also according to the justice of God, upon all those who will work wickedness and abomination before him."

He is talking about the latter-day Gentiles and about the basic alternatives that are open to them. If they obey the gospel, receive the kingdom, receive the Book of Mormon, repent of their sins, they will be a blessed people on this land forever. And they'll never be brought down into captivity.

He goes on to say, "And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, Nephi, saying: Thou hast beheld that if the Gentiles repent it shall be well with them; and ***thou also knowest concerning the covenants of the Lord unto the house of Israel;*** and thou also hast heard that whoso repenteth not must perish." Now, he's being very realistic with him.

"Therefore, wo be unto the Gentiles if it so be that they harden their hearts against the Lamb of God. For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men; a work which shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or on the other—either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds unto their being brought down into captivity, and also into destruction, ***both temporally and spiritually,*** according to the captivity of the devil, of which I have spoken."

Now, what he is doing is giving the Gentiles alternatives. Those alternatives are to repent, embrace the gospel and be a blessed people upon this land forever. Then he is saying if they don't, then there's going to come a time where these alternatives will be presented. These alternatives in a general way are presented today because the church is here, the missionary work is going forth and the Gentiles have opportunity

to receive it—but in the sense that Nephi is talking about it here, the presentation of these alternatives to the Gentiles is still a future thing. (Edited.)

Speaking of this future period when these alternatives will be very real to the Gentiles and presented with vividness and with power, and be of such a nature that if they refuse them they will be brought down to destruction ***both temporally and spiritually.*** We haven't seen that situation yet. But if they then reject the Lord's work when his Kingdom is presented to the degree that Nephi indicates, then the consequence will be rather rapid. And they will be brought down, he says, "into captivity and also into destruction ***both temporally and spiritually,*** according to the captivity of the devil."

There is a future era that we call the warfare against Zion. And in a sense the Gentiles have been making war against it since Joseph Smith got out of the sacred grove. In a sense they have. But there is this future period that the Book of Mormon speaks of, and it's in this context that these two alternatives will be very viable and very meaningful to the people of this land.

With that introduction, let's go to verse 9: "And it came to pass that he said unto me: Look, and behold that great and abominable church, which is the mother of abominations, whose foundation is the devil. And he said unto me: Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God," and let me just say parenthetically that it is not The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the entirety of all of its members.

Church of the Lamb of God = Church of the Firstborn.

"The one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil." And then he explains what the church of the devil is, and it has no identity with a given single organization on this earth. Note how he explains it. He says, "Wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth." Now, who, then, is the church of the devil? The answer is that it is ***anyone*** who is not identified with, supportive of, and part of the program of the Church of the Lamb.

As Nephi deals with this prophetic theme and he comes in the future to it here in 2 Nephi, for instance, chapter 30, verse 10, he says this: "For the time speedily cometh that the Lord God shall cause a great division among the people, and the wicked will he destroy; and he will spare his people, yea, even if it so be that he must destroy the wicked by fire."

Now, there's going to come a great division. That division will be so complete and so thorough in the forces of animosity or of righteousness—one on the one hand and one on the other—that there will be a total division. And in that day the gospel of Christ will be talked about worldwide as it has never been talked about before. In that day there will be a polarity largely of world societies either for or against the Kingdom.

He says, "And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters." That word "waters" is a scriptural word. It comes from Isaiah 18 and also from the book of Revelation 17:15, and it means scripturally, people. Waters means people. She sat upon the many waters. She had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues and people. He's not talking about just one organization, he's talking about something that is spiritually oriented, an attitude, a mind-set, a cultural set that is rather embracive of all the earth.

Then he says, "And it came to pass that I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and ***its numbers were few*** because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God, ***were also upon all the face of the earth; and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small,*** because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw." (1 Ne 14:12) Now, you begin to get the picture there.

This picture could not be fulfilled prior to World War II. Why? The policy of the Church prior to World War II was to do what? If you got converted in Germany or France or Italy, what did you do? You migrated to America. Then beginning with some declarations made by George Albert Smith and put into operation rather fully by President David O. McKay, following World War II, this Church became an international organization. President McKay had toured the world, and … the gospel opens up and then the counsel of the Church is to do what? Stay where you are and gather to the stakes there and build up organizations there. Then on top of that kind of program, we have Temples beginning to dot the area.

Yes, the temples are there for the convenience of the Saints, and yes they are there for the work of the Saints in regard to their dead, but they are also there for another reason. And I want to talk to you about that one. That's a part of this warfare against Zion picture.

So Nephi sees this polarization, which could not be fulfilled until sometime subsequent to World War II, and he goes on and says this: "And it came to pass that I beheld that the great mother of abominations did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles," primarily among western culture, the peoples of western culture, "to fight against the Lamb of God." Now, that's the warfare against Zion, and that is the major prophetic theme of this sacred book, the Book of Mormon…

He goes on verse 13 and he says this in explanation: "And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord." I said that the church of the Lamb isn't identically equivalent to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The church of the Lamb constitutes the righteous element within the Church… is that body of people when this pressure situation happens, who will meet the challenge ***head-on spiritually,*** and by their faith and their righteousness and their service and their building the Kingdom, their commitment to the Kingdom, the power of the Lamb of God will descend upon them and also upon the covenant people of the Lord, and that will include the Jewish people who are converted at that time. He says, "…who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory."

In order for them to "rise spiritually" and to fight the battle at that time, it means they aren't fighting "physically." Ergo, I believe it is once again safe to assume that this group talked about here are those that prepared themselves before everything went down and were led away early as the power of the Lamb fell upon them—it will later fall upon the "covenant people of the Lord" worldwide as the program is expanded as war is poured out upon those Saints outside the New Jerusalem.

Sometimes when the wolf is at the door, just the pressure of it unites people. We've got a lot of Latter-day Saints, more in the area of Latter-day complaints and ain'ts!, but we've got a lot of them. Sometimes we're a part of that too much, who would rather die for the gospel than to live for it, when a pressure situation comes where maybe you have to die for it, and then there'll be a lot of people who will arise to its defense at least in some way.

Once again, those who "lived for the Gospel" are lead away earlier.

What I'm saying is that when this situation comes upon us, and it's not very far down the road, then those people who truly live the gospel and who truly sanctify themselves—***you don't get the power of God in great glory just because somebody gets emotional over the Church, you don't get that!*** You might get some emotion and support on the basis of righteous indignation and support in a physical way, but we're not talking about that only. We're talking about people who meet the challenge of being sanctified and getting the endowments of the Spir-

it ***and the blessings of the Second Comforter,*** etc., etc. This power and this Spirit that will be made manifest among them will be visibly made manifest, because it will be so intense. It will be made manifest in a sense of defense.

Those that preach that we should "stick only to the milk" and that we shouldn't preach of things like The Second Comforter are in fact preaching anti-Christ doctrine, for that is the doctrine that will keep people out of the presence of the Son and also delay the Lord's Second coming—He is waiting on us.

This takes not only faith and righteousness, it takes the ordinances of the gospel and it takes the Temple and the blessings of the House of the Lord. The great objective is that under adversity such as Nephi sees, Zion will arise and be the Standard of righteousness in the world that she is designed to be. Zion as a true Standard must be Zion endowed with glory.

Over in Isaiah 4, and this is one of the chapters that Nephi quotes in its entirety in the Book of Mormon, and says it pertains to the last days. It is one that the angel Moroni also quoted, by the way, to Joseph Smith and explained to him, in September of 1823, according to Oliver Cowdery's account at least. Isaiah talks about the time where the Lord will endow Zion, he will create upon every dwelling place in Mount Zion and upon all her assemblies a cloud and smoke by day and the flaming of a fire by night. The Spirit and power will be that concentrated. That doesn't come just because you exercise the zeal of indignation over the oppression of an innocent people. That comes because people finally learn to sanctify their lives, and in this pressure situation, when that happens, this action will begin. And they'll look back at us with our rather lackadaisical, all-is-well-in-Zion attitude, and wonder why we didn't awaken earlier.

So Nephi sees this era of warfare, and he sees it taking place among all the nations, particularly of the Gentiles, so that if you have a little church organized over in Germany, for example, or France or Italy or England or Scotland or Wales, then you are going to see people in those whole areas gather against them. This isn't just the media and it isn't just a few bricks and a club or two. We're talking about bona fide warfare, genuine stuff, the good ole stuff, bona fide warfare against Zion.

What Andrus is describing here is found in **Revelation 12**:

> **17** And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, ***which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.***

The important part to distinguish now is found in the verses proceeding:

> **13** And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.
>
> **14** ***And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.***
>
> **15** And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.
>
> **16** And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

The "Church of the Lamb of God" flies into the wilderness, "into her place," before these events. So once again, people need to realize that verses 15–16 very likely refer to America as Brother Andrus points out next.

Then he sees that one means of preserving them will be the manifestation of the Lord's glory and power among them. He talks about another one here in verse 15. "And it came to pass that I beheld that the wrath of God was poured out upon the great and abominable church, insomuch that there were wars and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth." Now, "all the nations" is how inclusive? And that will include our beloved America. It's one of the nations, and one of the foremost. It will be the first great nation, if we understand the Book of Mormon thoroughly, that makes warfare against Zion.

In 3 Nephi 20, the Lord is talking about the building of Zion. Then in verse 41 he says, "And then shall a cry go forth: Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch not that which is unclean; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord. For ye shall not go out with haste nor go by flight; for the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel shall be your rearward." Then he goes on to talk about that.

He comes back to that same theme in 3 Nephi 21 where he talks about the possible judgments on America, then the building of the New Jerusalem, and then the power of God which is developed among them. Then, verse 25: "And then shall the power of heaven come down among them; and I also will be in the midst." This is part of the second coming. It's a preliminary appearance. We need to look more closely than the grand world appearance of his coming in glory, because he will come to Zion … years and years before he comes to the world in glory. This is one of those preliminary appearances.

He says, "And then shall the work of the Father commence at that day, even when this gospel shall be preached among the remnant of this people. Verily I say unto you, at that day shall the work of the Father commence among all the dispersed of my people, yea, even the tribes which have been lost," and here's the ten tribes coming in, "which the Father hath led away out of Jerusalem. Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people, with the Father to prepare the way whereby they may come unto me, that they may call on the Father in my name. Yea, and then shall the work commence, with the Father, among all nations, in preparing the way whereby his people may be gathered home to the land of their inheritance."

Note this again now, "And they shall go out from all nations; and they shall not go out in haste, nor go by flight, for I will go before them, saith the Father, and I will be their rearward." (3 Ne 21:29) Now, that's the great gathering. Some of us think that the gathering is over. No, we're in this interim period where we're building churches in foreign lands and building temples and preparing for this time of warfare against Zion. And when that time comes, then the gathering of Israel will take place.

Nephi is shown that here in 1 Nephi 14. Let me read with you again, beginning with verse 15: "And it came to pass that I beheld that the wrath of God was poured out upon the great and abominable church, insomuch that there were wars and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth. And as there began to be wars and rumors of wars among all the nations which belonged to the mother of abominations, the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold, the wrath of God is upon the mother of harlots; and behold, thou seest all these things."

Nephi gives us here in verse 17 a point of reference, a time when something is going to take place. He says, "And when the day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon the mother of harlots"—that statement indicates that he is giving us a point of time and of reference when something else will happen. "When the day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon the mother of harlots, which is the great and abominable church of all the earth, whose foundation is the devil, then, at that day, the work of the Father shall commence, in *preparing the way"*—note that this is *not doing it,* this is a preparatory work. "…shall commence, in preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants, which he hath made to his people who are of the house of Israel." Now, he's going to "prepare the way."

The great gathering of Israel is not just a physical gathering, it's a gathering to Zion. It's a gathering to the gospel, to the Temple, and it will be ultimately and finally a gathering to the endowment of glory and

power. In order to prepare for that, that gathering initially is going to be to Mount Zion, and that's on this land. If the Lord is going to prepare them for that great gathering, which isn't just to get their bodies physically to America, that gathering is to gather to his law, to his doctrine, to his program, to Zion, to the spiritual renewal that the gospel offers, to the endowment of glory, to the blessings of the house of the Lord, to the sealing powers, and all of these things. It's that kind of gathering. It's a gathering to the law of consecration, to the Holy Order of the Temple. It's that kind of gathering.

In order to prepare for that as we look at it from this vantage point, two things are necessary. Number one, there has to be a cleansing of the Saints. Why? Because we're just not cutting it, that's why. And it isn't just because we're a little lackadaisical. Isaiah says that Zion shall be redeemed with judgment and her converts with righteousness. ***The Prophet Joseph Smith*** says that a man *cannot come to Mount Zion except by suffering;* there has to be a refiner's fire.

In the Book of Mormon, for example, the Savior quotes Malachi, 3rd and 4th chapters. I don't know why he'd quote it there because we have it in the Bible, and he knew we would have it in the Bible. So you ask why he put Malachi 3 and 4 in there. They are prophetic about our day. ***But I think if you will study the Book of Mormon carefully, you'll find out why.*** In 3 Nephi he plants the gospel and talks about the last days, he talks about the building of the New Jerusalem and about the establishment of his church and his government and his kingdom here upon this land, and then he wants us to be very sure that we know how this is going to take place.

In Malachi 3:1–2, Malachi says, ***"I will send my messenger***... and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple." That coming to the temple, according to Section 42 ***is the Jackson County Temple.*** Then he asks the question, "But who shall abide the day of his coming and who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like refiner's fire and like fuller's soap, and he will purify and purge the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness."

Everyone knows how much I love this chapter for all the reasons bolded above, but I also love the ending of that chapter. I know that this group is a fulfillment to what Brother Hyrum Andrus is talking about here and what was prophesied to take place in **3 Nephi 24**, and we all know who the "messenger" is—who it is that shall return and discern.

> **16** Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.
>
> **17** And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.
>
> **18** Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

In order to build Zion, the righteous Latter-day Saints need to be refined, not just the inactives, but the righteous. And one thing the Lord is going to accomplish in this era of warfare is the refinement of his people so that ***they become not only totally obedient,*** but to the extent that they can feel as he wants them to feel and be pure as he wants them to be pure. So he's talking about a preparation, verse 17 again: "And when the day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon the mother of harlots, which is the great and abominable church of all the earth... when that day cometh shall the work of the Father commence in preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants."

That preparation, as I've said, is twofold. Number one, it's a cleansing of the Saints, a purifying of the Saints. I'm not talking about the inactives only, I'm talking about the righteous who will be subjected to the refiner's fire so that they can get the greater endowments of the Spirit that the Lord has for them and that Nephi sees is poured out upon the Saints when warfare is made against them, and which is necessary, finally, for Zion to come up and be the standard that the scriptures speak of, with the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. That's one thing that has to be done.

I'd also say that these are "birthing pangs" that will get worse and worse—"blessed are they who humble themselves without being compelled to be humble." We've felt the first shock with the desolating sickness, and we all should clearly see the scourge rising as war is already in foreign lands. Those that got themselves ready now, who feared the Lord now, who learned to work together now, those who learned to be "perfectly obedient to the keys" now, will be lead away first. We then have the next "birthing pang," etc., etc. as this process crescendos.

The second thing that has to be done is the cleansing of America. Why the cleansing of America? Because this is the land of Zion, and if the Gentiles after due season will not repent so as to make the transition and build up the Kingdom and spread the Kingdom abroad peacefully on the basis of the gospel of peace and love and unity, then the Lord is going to come out in judgment. When he does, this cesspoolism that we are in the midst of today and which our young people particularly are subjected to, is going to be cleansed away. As the Savior himself says, "All lyings and deceivings and envyings and priestcrafts and whoredoms shall be done away on this land." (3 Ne 21:19) ***People who think they are riding in the saddle on this floodgate of dissipation are going to be sadly mistaken.***

***The Lord has said he is going to do that, and unless he wants to offer an apology to Sodom and Gomorrah, he's going to have to do it.*** So there's got to be a cleansing of this land. When the Saints are refined and purified and when this land is cleansed and purified, then the Kingdom of God is established. Then Zion will be endowed with glory. Then we will have an order of things on this land. Then the gathering of Israel will take place, and they'll go out from among all nations, and they'll not go in haste, but they will go peacefully, slowly, bringing as many people with them as they can, and they will have the endowments of the Spirit like ancient Israel had as they left Egypt, the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. And they will come to Zion singing songs of everlasting joy. Now, that is the prophetic picture of the Book of Mormon.

1. "Birthing pangs" start, those that feared the Lord began to meet and talk and personally sanctify themselves, learning to be perfectly obedient to the keys and learning how to work with each other
2. Redemption of Zion and initial building of New Jerusalem—pillar of fire and cloud
3. Warfare against church members worldwide as "birthing pangs" crescendo
4. Fire is called down to protect the righteous worldwide, the pillar of fire and flame now spreading
5. America is cleansed, the ten tribes return, people begin to inhabit all the desolate cities, Zion established on this land
6. Worldwide gathering in and unto this land, "little Egypt's" all over the globes
7. The unrighteous can't cross the waters, so the focus changes from warfare against Zion to warfare against Old Jerusalem

We are on the very threshold of the beginning of that tremendous era of time.

Having seen this, then, the whole scene shifts. He says, 1 Nephi 14:18: "And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, saying: Look! And I looked and beheld a man, and he was dressed in a white robe. And the angel said unto me: Behold one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Behold, he shall see and write the remainder of these things; yea, and also many things which have been. And he shall also write concerning the end of the world. Wherefore, the things which he shall write are just and true; and behold they are written in the book which thou beheld proceeding out of the mouth of the Jew." That is the Bible.

"And at the time they proceeded out of the mouth of the Jew, or, at the time the book proceeded out of the mouth of the Jew, the things which were written were plain and pure, and most precious and easy to the understanding of all men. And behold, the things which this apostle of the Lamb shall write are many things which thou hast seen," talking to Nephi. "And behold, the remainder shalt thou see." So Nephi saw in his vision clear on down everything that John the Revelator saw. "And also others who have been, to them hath he shown all things, and they have written them; and they are sealed up to come forth in their purity," ***particularly the brother of Jared. And this is a part of the great content of the sealed portion.*** And he says, "And I, Nephi, heard and bear record, that the name of the apostle of the Lamb was John, according to the word of the angel."

Now, what has Nephi's vision to do with the book of Revelation? They are talking about the same thing. Nephi couldn't write it all, but what he wrote here in 1 Nephi 14 and his commentaries in 1 Nephi 22, Jacob's commentary in 2 Nephi 6, the Savior's explanations in 3 Nephi 16, 20 and 21, ***all of these help us and give us foundation to understand the book of Revelation,*** which, by the way, Joseph said "is one of the plainest books God ever caused to be written." [*Teachings,* p. 290] And that's true. I bear you my testimony that's true. And you can say it yourself.

...In the latter-day, and we'll take John since John the Revelator has seen the things that Nephi saw, there are two major powers that will finally make war against Zion and the House of Israel—two major powers. Turn to Revelation 13.

Here we have a spotlight given to us on the two major powers that oppose the Kingdom of God in the latter-day. John writes as follows: He says, verse 1: "And I saw another sign, in the likeness of the kingdoms of the earth; a beast rise up out of the sea, and he stood upon the sand of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns; and upon his heads the name of blasphemy." If you study those terms and those symbols in other places of the book of Revelation, ***you find that they have to do with latter-day Babylon,*** with those forces that are generally associated with what we call western civilization, or with modern-day Christendom and the nations of modern-day Christendom.

As he sees this beast, and it's the figure of a beast, it's a symbol showing them the kind of character of these powers, he says, "And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion; and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast." He goes on and talks about him. Verse 7: ***"And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."***

In verse 11, having seen this first beast, then he says this: "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast"—see, these two beasts are correlated and related—"whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men." There's power in respect to the adversary that is made manifest.

Let me just add this point of clarification. When Zion begins to arise with glory and power so that there is visible power made manifest and the glory begins to be made manifest as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, then the Lord will permit Satan to manifest an equivalent opposing force. ***And this is the day when that takes place.***

And when are we seeing cloud by day and pillars of fire and so forth? Post the Redemption of Zion. Ergo, this anti-Christ once again is confirmed to be post these events, which connects perfectly with what we already know: if the Saints aren't in New Jerusalem and they don't sanctify their lives to thus qualify for the pillar of fire over their home, they will be within the power of this entity...

He goes on and speaks of this latter-day beast, indicating that he will cause both the small and the great, rich and poor, bond and free, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads, that no man might buy or sell save he that had the mark or the name of the beast. ***Now, that's not talking about America. They may make an effort to do that kind of thing in America, but this is talking about a situation that prevails in the great and abominable church vicinity or area or domain, and it'll be after the redemption of Zion. It's that period.***

Confirming what I just said above...

But the point I want to make right at this time is that there are two beasts that are spoken of, that John describes. Now let's turn to Daniel 7. What's Daniel 7 all about? What's the significance of Daniel 7? What great message does Daniel 7 contain? Well, it's in Daniel 7 that Daniel was shown the great council of Adam-ondi-Ahman in the last days. That's the significance of Daniel 7. In addition to that great council, he is also shown the world situation and the forces of corruption and of evil in that day that will be making war against Zion. So the Daniel 7 picture isn't merely about the council, it's also about the situation that prevails within the earth.

That council is important. Here's what the Prophet Joseph said about it, Teachings, p. 157: "Daniel in his seventh chapter speaks of the Ancient of Days; he means the oldest man, our Father Adam, Michael, he will call his children together and hold a council with them ***to prepare them for the coming of the Son of Man."*** Now, this is a ***preparatory council.***

He goes on to talk about some of the things that take place in respect to ***the delivering of keys, the judgment, and the preparations that are necessary.***

Then Daniel ... tells us about the Adam-ondi-Ahman council, from verse 9 through verse 14. And he tells us about that council being held, and when it is held and its work is in its final stages, then Christ will make his appearance in that council, and there he will be crowned by the priesthood of all ages, all dispensations united by this great council into the latter-day dispensation of the fulness of times, to make in fact the dispensation of the fulness of times, in its fulness. Then Christ will come.

(Multiple meetings, final meeting is crowning)

It says, verse 14, "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, ***should*** serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away." So in that council, Christ comes and by the priesthood of all ages, in that sacred valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, he is accepted, he is sustained by the vote of that council as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Now, has the [Great and Dreadful day] taken place yet? No. But they are prepared for it.

In this setting, you are talking about the setting for the Adam-ondi-Ahman council. Even today we're making preparations at Adam-ondi-Ahman, aren't we? They are beautifying the place and fixing it up. How soon that's going to take place, I don't know. But the brethren are working quietly, inoffensively, in that direction.

When that council is held, there will be two great world powers. One will be Babylon, and the other will be a little thing called "the little horn." It will be a mighty system and it will be called the "little horn." It will subdue three of the kingdoms of the Babylon order... He goes on and he sees this, and we need to see this picture because the Book of Mormon opens this whole thing up, really it does. He sees that this little horn makes war with the Saints and prevails against them, "Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High." Then he goes on and sees that the ten horns are these ten

kingdoms. He sees the little horn, but then the clarification is made, "But the judgment shall sit," and that judgment is at Adam-ondi-Ahman, "and they shall take away his dominion," the dominion of the little horn who will have dominated Babylon. That's the picture of the 13th chapter of Revelation, that the second power dominates the first and causes people to worship the first. He says, "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and all dominions shall serve and obey him." ***And that's the Millennial system.*** Now, can you see how he's talking about ***the beginning of that?***

**Elder Bruce R. McConkie** on another occasion taught what we need to be doing in the meantime:

"The gathering of Israel and the establishment of Zion in the latter days is divided into three periods or phases. The first phase is past; we are now living in the second phase; and the third lies ahead. Prophecies speak of them all. If we do not rightly divide the word of God, as Paul's expression is, we will face confusion and uncertainty. If on the other hand we correctly envision our proper role and know what should be done today, we shall then be able to use our time, talents, and means to the best advantage in building up the kingdom and preparing a people for the second coming of the Son of Man.

"The three phases of this great latter-day work are as follows:

"Phase I—From the First Vision, the setting up of the kingdom on April 6, 1830, and the coming of Moses on April 3, 1836, to the secure establishment of the Church in the United States and Canada, a period of about 125 years.

"Phase II—From the creation of stakes of Zion in overseas areas, beginning in the 1950s, ***to the second coming of the Son of Man,*** a period of unknown duration.

"Phase III—From our Lord's second coming until the kingdom is perfected and the knowledge of God covers the earth as the waters cover the sea, and from then until the end of ***the Millennium,*** a period of 1,000 years.

"Many things have already been restored, and many things are yet to be restored. Israel has been gathered in part, but in many respects the greatest part of the gathering of Israel is ahead. The foundations of Zion have been laid, but the promised City of Holiness has yet to be built. We have done some of the things destined to be accomplished in this dispensation; we are now engaged in doing the very things reserved for our time; and there are many things ahead to be done by our children and grandchildren and by all those who shall build on the foundation we are now laying"

("Come: Let Israel Build Zion," General Conference, April 1977).

Now, another point here. After this period of time, after this takes place, then the Lord says this in verse 32: "And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered; ***for in mount Zion,"*** number one, ***"and in Jerusalem,"*** the second place, "shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, ***and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call."*** There is a third place where there will be security.

On one occasion the Prophet Joseph took the 2nd chapter of Joel and read the whole thing, and then explained it. Let me read here basically what he said, in *Teachings,* page 70 and 71. He said he read the 2nd chapter, and then he explains it. Just to be brief, he says that in the last day, God will call a remnant in which is to be deliverance, ***"as well as in Jerusalem and Zion."*** There are three places where there will be some semblance of peace and of deliverance, temporally. He says, "Now if God should give no more revelations, where will we find Zion and this remnant?" If we don't have any more than what's in the Bible, where are we going to find this? "The time is near when desolation is to cover the earth, and then God will have a place of deliverance ***in his remnant, and in Zion," and Jerusalem.***

Now, when these judgments come to America and there is a disruption critically of our whole land, of our whole policy and economy, when that is over with there will be only three places of deliverance. One of those will be Mount Zion. The second will be the Jews, temporally.

The third "remnant" is those Saints worldwide whom we have talked about already at great length, whom the Lord is protecting "by fire."

We all know that the word Babylon has two connotations. We know that it has to do with an ancient kingdom way back when—but we also know that when we read the word Babylon, that we have to go through a kind of a mental process and ask ourselves, Is that talking about anciently, or modernly? As we also know that Babylon refers to the latter-days, that there is a latter-day Babylon. And it takes its character from the symbol of the early Babylon—splendor, glory, worldliness, all of that.

So when we talk about Babylon in the latter-day, we have no problem with that. We know that there is such a thing. How many of us know that there is such a thing as the "Assyrian"? Assyria, anciently, consisted of a militaristic people up north of Israel. It was Shalmaneser, who subdued the northern kingdom of Israel, and took them captive and destroyed that whole northern kingdom, took them captive for a time until finally Ninevah, the capitol of ancient Assyria, fell. When Ninevah fell, then those captive Israelites took advantage of that and fled out of there. They moved up between the Black and the Caspian Sea, through the Caucasus Mountains, and they dumped off into the southern part of Europe, and that's how we get to be the blood of Israel.

Then there was apparently a group of them who said, "We want to live the covenants like we've never done before," and they took off somewhere into the north land. And as the Book of Mormon indicates, they still existed as a group. Assyria, then, was a militaristic power. How many of us know, though, that there is a latter-day Assyrian? Isaiah talks about him. Let me turn to 2 Nephi 18, and let's get just a few things on this in relation to it. Keep in mind that when Nephi puts these chapters of Isaiah in there, ***he's not putting a history lesson in here.*** He's saying, and he says it clearly, these chapters pertain to the last days, and I'm putting them in here so that you can read them so that you can read and understand that they relate to the last days. So here they are, and understand them. This is not the book of Isaiah, now, this is what Nephi selects and puts in. Note what he says:

Talking about people being somewhat obstinate: "Therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth upon them the waters of the river," verse 7, and "waters" means what? People. "The Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria and all his glory; and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks. And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck."

We'll clarify tomorrow evening that Judah has more than one meaning, and here it applies to a country. "And the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel." So he is talking about a power that's going to come up.

In chapter 20 of 2 Nephi, beginning with verse 5: "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is their indignation. I will send him against a hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. Howbeit he meaneth not so," he doesn't think he's doing my will, "neither doth his heart think so; but in his heart it is to destroy and cut off nations not a few."

Then he talks about that again. Now, turn over to verse 24: "Therefore, thus saith the Lord God of Hosts; O my people that dwellest in Zion." So he is talking about us. "Be not afraid of the Assyrian; he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee after the manner of

Egypt." In other words, he will do to you like Pharaoh did to the ancient Israelites. He will lift up his staff against us after the manner of Egypt. "For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction. And the Lord of Hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb." You go back into the Old Testament and read about that.

(Redemption of Zion—Gideon)

"And as his rod was upon the sea so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt. And it shall come to pass in that day that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder," speaking of Zion, "and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing." And then he finally, going back here to pick up a further statement in the same chapter, verses 12 to 15: "Wherefore it shall come to pass that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion and upon Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. For he saith: By the strength of my hand and by my wisdom I have done these things; for I am prudent; and I have moved the borders of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man; And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people," etc. Then the Lord says, "Don't you know that I have all things under my control?"

When he says that after he has completed his whole work upon Mount Zion, what is his work upon Mount Zion? And Jerusalem? When the Lord has completed the full program of latter-day events that relate to Zion and Jerusalem, then and not until then will he punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria. The Lord says, "I will send him against a hypocritical nation," and you don't have to look very far today in our beloved America to know who he's talking about there.

Then he talks about the Saints. Fear not the Assyrian. He's going to handle you like Pharaoh handled ancient Israel. But don't be so concerned about it, because I'm going to break his power in relation to you. But then he says, about the total and ultimate thing, that only after he has performed his whole work upon Mount Zion and Jerusalem, that he will finally destroy the Assyrian. As you read the Jerusalem theme, read Ezekiel 38 and 39, where he talks about the great battle at Jerusalem, Armageddon and the Valley of Jehoshaphat, that whole theme, he talks about a power that comes from the north called Gog and Magog. It comes against Israel. It is combined in its opposition to Israel with the powers of Babylon which come in from the other direction. And all nations are gathered against Jerusalem.

1. "Birthing pangs" start, those that feared the Lord began to meet and talk and personally sanctify themselves, learning to be perfectly obedient to the keys and learning how to work with each other
2. Redemption of Zion and initial building of New Jerusalem—pillar of fire and cloud
3. Warfare against church members worldwide as "birthing pangs" crescendo
4. Fire is called down to protect the righteous worldwide, the pillar of fire and flame now spreading
5. America is cleansed, the ten tribes return, people begin to inhabit all the desolate cities, Zion established on this land (this is the Assyrian yoke being removed, this entity is kicked out of America)
6. Worldwide gathering in and unto this land, "little Egypt's" all over the globes
7. The unrighteous can't cross the waters, so the focus changes from warfare against Zion to warfare against Old Jerusalem
8. The evil are gathered to Old Jerusalem to be destroyed

1 Nephi 22, He speaks of this marvelous work among the Gentiles, verse 8, "...which shall be of great worth unto our seed... And it shall also be of worth unto the Gentiles; and not only unto the Gentiles but unto ***all the house of Israel, unto the making known of the covenants of the Father of heaven unto Abraham."*** Again, the Father of heaven in the sense that we've talked about it, is Christ.

But when he's talking about the house of Israel and making known the covenants of the Father of heaven, he's talking about Jehovah, or Christ. "...unto Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." Note what he says in verse 10: "And I would, my brethren, that ye should know that all the kindreds of the earth cannot be blessed ***unless he shall make bare his arm in the eyes of the nations. Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to make bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations, in bringing about his covenants and his gospel unto those who are of the house of Israel."***

Let's stop right there. What does it mean to make bare his arm in the eyes of all nations? Over and over again, that statement is made. Let me just give you a few references: Mosiah 12. We're talking about Abinadi and his prophecies of the last days, and he says here in verse 24: ***"The Lord hath made bare his arm in the eyes of all nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."*** This thing isn't going to take place in a corner! This is something that every nation ***is going to see,*** and they are going to make a choice, and there is going to be a great division. You are either on one side or on the other. He says this in relation to Zion. Verse 22: ***"Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice;*** with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye ***when the Lord shall bring again Zion." He's talking about bringing again Zion, and in order to do it he's got to make bare his arm in the eyes of all nations.*** Another statement, and this from chapter 15, verse 28: "And now I say unto you that the time shall come that the salvation of the Lord shall be declared to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. Yea, Lord, ***thy watchmen shall lift up their voice;*** with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, ***when the Lord shall bring again Zion."*** His truth is going to be such that we'll have a unity, hopefully.

He goes on to say, "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. ***The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."***

Perfect time to insert **Doctrine and Covenant 101** into the mix:

**10** I have sworn, and the decree hath gone forth by a former commandment which I have given unto you, that I would let fall the sword of mine indignation in behalf of my people; and even as I have said, it shall come to pass.

**11** Mine indignation is soon to be poured out without measure upon all nations; and this will I do when the cup of their iniquity is full.

**12** ***And in that day all who are found upon the watch-tower, or in other words, all mine Israel, shall be saved.***

**13** ***And they that have been scattered shall be gathered.***

**14** And all they who have mourned shall be comforted.

**15** And all they who have given their lives for my name shall be crowned.

**16** Therefore, let your hearts be comforted concerning Zion; for all flesh is in mine hands; be still and know that I am God.

**17** ***Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered.***

**18** They that remain, and are pure in heart, shall return, and come to their inheritances, they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy, to build up the waste places of Zion—

**19** And all these things that the prophets might be fulfilled.

**20** And, behold, there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed, for the work of the gathering of my saints

After covering the context that we already have, I ask, "Have the scales fallen from your eyes? Can you see? Do you know what the scriptures mean?" If the answer is yes, then we are one step closer to:

**Doctrine and Covenants 113**

**7** Questions by Elias Higbee: What is meant by the command in Isaiah, 52d chapter, 1st verse, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion—and what people had Isaiah reference to?

**8** He had reference to those whom God ***should call in the last days,*** who should hold the power of priesthood ***to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel;*** and to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage; ***also to return to that power which she had lost.***

**9** What are we to understand by ***Zion loosing herself from the bands of her neck;*** 2d verse?

**10** We are to understand that ***the scattered remnants are exhorted to return to the Lord from whence they have fallen; which if they do, the promise of the Lord is that he will speak to them, or give them revelation. The bands of her neck are the curses of God upon her, or the remnants of Israel in their scattered condition among the Gentiles.***

Now in addition to Nephi and to Abinadi, the Savior himself discusses this in 3 Nephi chapter 16 where in verse 18 you have this statement where he is talking about Zion ***"Thy watchmen shall lift up thy voice;*** with the voice together shall they sing, for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion." Then he goes on and in verse 20 says ***"The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God."*** He says the same thing also in 3 Nephi 20:35. What does it mean to "make bare his arm in the eyes of all nations"? Let me give you an example. He did this kind of thing once, anciently. There was once a nation where the Lord made bare his arm and manifest his power in great judgments and plagues and manifest his glory as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. What was that nation? The answer is, Egypt. And with power he brought forth and delivered his people out of Egypt.

Let me put it this way: ***There are going to be little Egypts all over the earth in the last days.*** There will be people in Germany, France, Italy, England, the countries of the world, and when this era of warfare takes place and the mother of abominations gathers multitudes from among the Gentiles to fight against Zion, then Nephi says, "I beheld the power of God in great glory descend upon the saints of the Lamb, upon the covenant people of the Lord." And where were these people? They were in these various countries of the earth where the Church has been established—and where, by the way, there are now temples, temples not only for the work for the dead and for the facilitating of the basic ordinances of the gospel to the Saints, but temples where they can retreat and where they can be given spiritual direction, and through the sacred ordinances of which the powers of the Spirit will be developed in their midst. As those powers are developed and the Lord steps in to preserve them, then the ensign of Zion will be raised among ***all people.*** These people will be preserved by the glory and power of the Lord.

These people are "the remnants worldwide" that Joseph Smith talked of that we read earlier.

In the meantime in the whole scenario, ***Zion will be the first group here in America to be cleansed. The end result of this cleansing is...***

Zion is cleansed first—the righteous few in the church redeem Zion. This brings about:

... the establishment of the Lord's kingdom, the establishment of Zion with glory and with power, the cleansing of America and the establishment of the Lord's program. ***And then*** as warfare is made ***against the outlying areas of Zion,*** then the Lord will begin to gather his people.

Do we see the prophetic picture? Is it becoming clearer? Do we understand the order? I hope so...

He will say, "Don't go in haste, no reason. I'm going to go before you, and I will be your rearward"—3 Nephi 20 and 21. "And you go out slowly and gather as many people as you can to go with you." Why? Because if they stay behind, what's the other alternative? What was the alternative that Nephi saw? If they reject this, they will be brought down into judgment both spiritually and temporally. That is the general picture.

By the entity that we already discussed above who "wore down the Saints of the Most High."

Nephi sees that, and he explains here, going back to verse 10 of 1 Nephi 22, "and I would, my brethren, that ye should know"—now, you've got to *know* this; this is an important point—"that all kindreds of the earth cannot be blessed...." The forces of iniquity and the powers of unrighteousness are such that all nations of the earth cannot be blessed, "unless he shall make bare his arm in the eyes of the nations." And how is he going to do it? ***Through his people who are in their midst and where the glory and power is made manifest to preserve them.***

This is how one truly, truly becomes a "Savior on Mt Zion"—through these people will the Lord preserve (i.e., save) His people.

Then he goes on, "Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to make bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations, in bringing about his covenants and his gospel unto those who are of the house of Israel." Remember we read 1 Nephi 14, verse 17, where he says that in this era of warfare he is going to perform a preparatory work. That preparatory work in the era of warfare prepares for the gathering of Israel and will be the cleansing of the Saints and the cleansing of America. Then he will begin the great world gathering that's foretold in the scriptures.

He says, "Wherefore, he will bring them again out of captivity, and they shall be gathered together to the lands of their inheritance; and they shall be brought out of obscurity and out of darkness; and they shall know that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer, the Mighty One of Israel." (1 Ne 22:12) ***This is a time when his arm is made bare, and they know it!*** "And the blood of that great and abominable church, which is the whore of all the earth, shall turn upon their own heads; for they shall war among themselves, and the sword of their own hands shall fall upon their own heads, and they shall be drunken with their own blood. And every nation which shall war against thee, O house of Israel, shall be turned one against another, and they shall fall into the pit which they digged to ensnare the people of the Lord.

"And all that fight against Zion shall be destroyed, and that great whore, who hath perverted the right ways of the Lord, yea, that great and abominable church, shall tumble to the dust and great shall be the fall of it. For behold, saith the prophet, the time cometh speedily that Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men; for the day soon cometh that all the proud and they who do wickedly shall be as stubble; and the day cometh that they must be burned." (1 Ne 22:15–15) Now, is that a glorious picture? It's a rough one, isn't it? Does that indicate that Zion is going to simply sit on the side and watch it? No. Zion is going to be involved; this is a warfare against Zion. This is the era of warfare against Zion.

All right, let's read Nephi's explanation further. He says, "For the time soon cometh that the fulness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all the children of men; for he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous. Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire.

"Behold, my brethren, I say unto you, that these things must shortly come; yea, even blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke must come; and it

must needs be upon the face of this earth, and it cometh unto men according to the flesh if it so be that they will harden their hearts against the Holy One of Israel. For behold, the righteous shall not perish; for the time surely must come that all they who fight against Zion shall be cut off. And the Lord will surely prepare a way for his people unto the fulfilling of the words of Moses," where he talks about if they reject Christ, then they will finally be cut off. (1 Ne 22:18–19.)

This is where the "one like Moses," who is Joseph Smith, will be spearheading the work.

Then he goes on and speaks of the ushering in of the Millennial kingdom. Let me ask you to just read that for yourself. But let's turn to another explanation on this whole theme. This is 2 Nephi 6 where Jacob comes back to the same theme. verse 13: "Wherefore, they that fight against Zion and the covenant people of the Lord shall lick up the dust of their feet; and the people of the Lord shall not be ashamed. For the people of the Lord are they who wait for him; for ***they still wait for the coming of the Messiah.***

Interesting that these people are still waiting for the Lord. They don't believe it has all already happened in secret and that nobody knew about it—NO! They STILL WAIT for the PROMISES OF ISRAEL TO BE FULFILLED!

And behold, according to the words of the prophet, the Messiah will set himself again the second time to recover them; wherefore, he will manifest himself unto them in power and great glory." This is a real power situation. He goes on to say, "Unto the destruction of their enemies, ***when that day cometh when they shall believe in him;*** and none will he destroy that believe in him.

(Faith as the Brother of Jared)

"And they that believe not in him shall be destroyed, both by fire, and by tempest, and by earthquakes, and by bloodsheds, and by pestilence, ***and by famine.*** And they shall know that the Lord is God, the Holy One of Israel."

Now, pay particular attention to verse 16 and 17: "For shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?" Now, that's a question. Who is the prey? Zion. So he asks the question, "For shall the prey"—*Zion*—"be taken from the mighty and the lawful captive delivered? But thus saith the Lord: Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; for the Mighty God shall deliver his covenant people. For thus saith the Lord: I will contend with them that contendeth with thee—And I will feed them that oppress thee, with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine; and all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."

Now, can you see the general picture? This is the Book of Mormon, my brothers and sisters. To many of us, there are two sealed books. One is the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon. And the other is this thing from which I've been reading. ***That's true! I don't want to be negative on that, but ... it's a sealed record to many of us.***

Now, let me turn finally to Christ's explanations

In 3 Nephi 16:10: "And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you: At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischief's, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; and if they shall do all those things, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them."

He goes on in verse 11 and 12 and says, "And then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them. And I will show unto thee, O house of Israel, that the Gentiles shall not have power over you."

He goes on to say, "And I will remember my covenant unto you, O house of Israel, and ye shall come unto the knowledge of the fulness of my gospel." But then he clarifies, "But if the Gentiles will repent and return unto me, saith the Father, behold they shall be numbered among my people, O house of Israel," they shall be numbered among the people of the Lord. And he says, "And I will not suffer my people, who are of the house of Israel, to go through among them and tread them down, saith the Father. But if they will not turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, I will suffer them, yea, I will suffer my people, O house of Israel, that they shall go through among them, and shall tread them down, and they shall be as salt that hath lost its savor, which is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of my people, O house of Israel." ***He goes on to talk about the fulfillment of the Lord's covenants at that time.***

Now, what is the Lord saying, though? The Lord is saying that a set of circumstances will so happen, will take place, so that eventually if the Gentiles don't repent, the remnant of Jacob on this land will go through the Gentiles and they will be like a lion in the midst of the beasts of the forests, and like a young lion in a flock of sheep, who, if he goes through both treads down and tramples into pieces, and none can deliver. And he makes that statement 3 times.

I've read to you 3 Nephi 16, let me turn to 3 Nephi 20. This is verse 15 to 22, and note what he says: "And I say unto you, that if the Gentiles do not repent after the blessing which they shall receive, after they have scattered my people—Then shall ye, who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, go forth among them; and ye shall be in the midst of them who shall be many." Now, note that the Gentiles are many in comparison.

"And ye shall be among them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, and as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he goeth through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thy hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off. And I will gather my people together as a man gathereth his sheaves into the floor." Now, this is another scenario of this great gathering of Israel. Israel is gathered from the Gentile nations, and they go out not in haste, because the Lord goes before them and he is their rearward.

(Redemption of Zion)

In the meantime, you're going to gather his people also here in America. He goes on to say, "For I will make my people with whom the Father hath covenanted, yea, I will make thy horn iron" and horn is a symbol of power, "and I will make thy hoofs brass," and that's the instrument of destruction. "And they shall beat in pieces many people; and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. And behold, I am he who doeth it. And it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that the sword of my justice shall hang over them," the Gentiles, "at that day; and except they repent it shall fall upon them, saith the Father, yea, even upon all the nations of the Gentiles. And it shall come to pass that I will establish my people, O house of Israel. And behold, this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; ***and it shall be a New Jerusalem.*** And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you."

Now, can you begin to get that picture? When this situation happens, it finally leads into the establishment of the New Jerusalem, it leads to the sanctification of the Lord's people, and the Lord himself will come and dwell with his people prior to his great world coming. In connection with this, read Isaiah 59, verses 19 and 20. Note how Isaiah puts it: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Can you see that as Nephi saw it? "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord."

***Having explained this, then, the Savior gives us the most detailed information on it. It's here where things begin to unfold and you begin to see the real meaning of the whole scenario. This is 3 Nephi 21.***

(Joseph Smith to Return)

Here he begins by explaining about the remnant, verse 12, "And my people who are a remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, yea, in the midst of them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he go through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Their hands shall be lifted up upon their adversaries, and all their enemies shall be cut off. Yea, wo be unto the Gentiles except they repent; for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Father, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots." This is Old Testament terminology. What does it mean to cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee and destroy thy chariots? What's he talking about? He's talking about transportation.

He says, "And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strongholds." He's talking about our beloved America. This comes pretty close to home. He says, "And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thy land." All this devil worship is going to go by the way. "And thou shalt have no more soothsayers; Thy graven images I will also cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee, and thou shalt no more worship the works of thy hands." This whole era of materialism, crass materialism, is going to pass away.

He goes on to say, "And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee; so ***will I destroy thy cities."***

(i.e "towers")

Now, groves in ancient Israel were places of worship. Their modern equivalent is cathedrals, great churches, etc. "And it shall come to pass that all lyings, and deceivings, and envyings, and strifes, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, shall be done away," in this land.

"For it shall come to pass, saith the father, that at that day whosoever will not repent and come unto my Beloved Son, them will I cut off from among my people, O house of Israel; And I will execute vengeance and fury upon them, even as upon the heathen, such as they have not heard."

Good time to include the final section of The Parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees to connect all the dots here as this is clearly referring to the Redemption of Zion via "the strength of the Lord's House."

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**55** And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;

**56** And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard; for it is mine; I have bought it with money.

**57** Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen.

**58** And inasmuch as they gather together against you, avenge me of mine enemies, that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land.

In Doctrine and Covenants 103:21–22, the Lord clearly identifies this servant as Joseph Smith Jr.

Now this chapter, this statement that I've read to you comes from where? It's Old Testament terminology. Where does it come from? It's taken lock, stock and barrel out of the 5th chapter of Micah. Now, that's important. It's important for us to go back and read the prophecy as Micah gave it. As Jesus expressed it and gave it to us, he applied it to the American Gentiles if we do not as a people repent. Then these circumstances will take place.

Let's go back to Micah and pick it up as Micah gives it to us from his day as he looks down to our time. He is speaking here in this prophecy about Christ, and it's this prophecy that tells us where Christ is going to be born. He says, verse 2 of chapter 5: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Now, when the Jews wanted to know where the Messiah was going to be born, where did they point? Micah, chapter 5. Jesus, this Ruler whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting, is going to be born in Bethlehem. Now, that's an important point. But the whole chapter, beginning with the focus on Christ and his birth, is a prophecy about a latter-day Assyrian. It's going to come into a land and raise great havoc and judgment—that's what the prophecy is about. And about Christ being the Deliverer of his people when the Assyrian comes.

Let's read on. "Therefore will he," that is, this Person who is born in Bethlehem who is really the God of Israel, who has been from everlasting, "Therefore will he give them," that is, Israel, "up." He is going to forsake them because of their wickedness, and scatter them throughout the whole world. "Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth." (Micah 5:3) Now, who is it who is going to travail and bring forth and be the key for the gathering of Israel? Well, he's talking about Zion. He is going to give Israel up until after Zion has travailed and been cleansed and brings forth. And then he's going to do his work of gathering Israel.

"Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth," that is, Zion; Then ***the remnant of his brethren shall return***

(once again confirming the remnant are these Saints worldwide not currently in the New Jerusalem)

unto the children of Israel. And he," this Person born in Bethlehem, "shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God; and they shall abide; for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth." Zion is going to be established and He will be great unto the ends of the earth.

"And this man," this one who was born in Bethlehem, "this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land." This is not ancient Assyria, this Assyrian is something after Christ. He is talking now about Christ's deliverance of his people. And Jesus applied what is said thereafter to America and to the situation that will prevail ***in America.*** He says, "And this man shall be the peace when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces, ***then shall we raise against him,"*** that is, the Assyrian, ***"seven shepherds and eight principle men,"*** and ***this is talking about the deliverance process.*** "And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof; thus shall he," this person born in Bethlehem, "deliver us from the Assyrian when he cometh into our land and when he treadeth within our borders.

"And the remnant of Jacob," and here's the part that Jesus quotes, "And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of man. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people, as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep; who, if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots." (Micah 5:710) Now, that's 3 Nephi 21, isn't it? It's

the whole thing there. "And I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand; and thou shalt have no more soothsayers. Thy graven images also will I cut off and thy standing images out of the midst of thee...And I will pluck up thy groves out of the midst of thee, so will I destroy thy cities. And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard." (Micah 5:12–15.)

What does all that mean? That's the context in which—and Jesus just excerpted part of that and put it in and said it applies to America. When the remnant of Jacob goes through, which will include all Israel

(or "all the strength of the Lord's House")

as President Joseph Fielding Smith once made clear—but when they go through among the Gentiles, it will be after the coming of the Assyrian. And what will the Assyrian do? The Lord will send him against a hypocritical nation. And as Joel said in the last verse of the 2nd chapter of Joel, when the Assyrian has been driven back, the Saints are purified, then the Lord will begin pouring out his Spirit upon all people. ***And he'll start with Zion.*** "And your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall have dreams." Then he goes on and says that there will be three places of deliverance—***Mount Zion, Jerusalem and the remnant whom the Lord shall call.***

After the Assyrian has been through, what happens to the Gentile, the American economy and polity? I hate to think of it. On the other hand, I hate to think of the maniacal way in which we are handling our affairs, both political and economic, particularly our economic.

...But the problem isn't that, the problem essentially is the spiritual and moral decadence of our country. That is essentially the problem, and we are not, as Brigham Young said, keeping the broad road to destruction, we're going, instead, cross lots to hell! And how long we can continue that, I don't know. But in the midst of this, you are going to have a situation finally where the American Gentiles rise up and begin to make war against Zion. And this will begin this era of warfare against Zion. I want you to see 3 Nephi 21 in connection with 3 Nephi 22 in order to get this picture rounded out. What is 3 Nephi 21 about? The Gentiles, it explains, that if they repent they can come in and help build the New Jerusalem and be a blessed people on this land forever. And if they don't repent and the time comes when they are ripe in iniquity, and that is the stipulation the Book of Mormon places on it, when the American Gentiles are ripe in iniquity, the great promise concerning this land, that it is the land of Zion and that people who live here will either serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ, and here again is the Book of Mormon emphasis on Christ, they'll serve the God of the land who is Jesus Christ, or they will be ***swept off*** when the fulness of his wrath comes. Now, isn't that the Book of Mormon decree for this land?

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

"The Book of Mormon is a record of the forefathers of our western tribes of Indians; having been found through the ministration of an holy angel, and translated into our own language by the gift and power of God, after having been hid up in the earth for the last fourteen hundred years, containing the word of God which was delivered unto them. By it we learn that our western tribes of Indians are descendants from that Joseph who was sold into Egypt, and that the land of America is a promised land unto them, and unto it all the tribes of Israel will come, with as many of the Gentiles as shall comply with the requisitions of the new covenant. But the tribe of Judah will return to old Jerusalem. The city of Zion spoken of by David, in the one hundred and second Psalm, will be built upon the land of America, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads." (Isaiah 35:10); and then they will be delivered from the overflowing scourge that shall pass through the land. But Judah shall obtain deliverance at Jerusalem. See Joel 2:32; Isaiah 26:20 and 21; Jeremiah 31:12; Psalms 1:5; Ezekiel 34:11, 12 and 13. These are testimonies that the Good Shepherd will put forth His own sheep, and lead them out from all nations where they have been scattered in a cloudy and dark day, to Zion, and to Jerusalem; besides many more testimonies which might be brought.

"And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country. The people of the Lord, those who have complied with the requirements of the new covenant, have already commenced gathering together to Zion, which is in the state of Missouri; therefore I declare unto you the warning which the Lord has commanded me to declare unto this generation, remembering that the eyes of my Maker are upon me, and that to Him I am accountable for every word I say, wishing nothing worse to my fellow-men than their eternal salvation; therefore, "Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come." Repent ye, repent ye, and embrace the everlasting covenant, and flee to Zion, before the overflowing scourge overtake you... Remember these things; call upon the Lord while He is near, and seek Him while He may be found, is the exhortation of your unworthy servant.

"(Signed) JOSEPH SMITH, JUN.—DHC 1:312–316."

("Zion and Jerusalem," *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 17–18)

He gives them those alternatives, here, to the Gentiles in 3 Nephi 21. Then he talks about the building of the New Jerusalem. Some people have a hard one on that. President Joseph Fielding Smith made it clear, but we've still got problems on it. We think that when we go back to Jackson County we're going to turn the keys of the Kingdom over to some faithful Indian person and we're going to build the New Jerusalem under his direction. Now, that's not true. It simply isn't true. ***And besides that, it's false.***

What is true is that Ephraim holds the birthright. And when the Lord talks about the redemption of Zion and the building of his Kingdom, he says this: "Behold, this is the blessing of the everlasting God upon the tribes of Israel," D&C 133, verse 34. "And the *richer blessing upon the head of Ephraim* and his fellows." Now, why the richer blessing upon Ephraim? Because he has borne the heat of the day, because he holds the keys of presidency. He finally learns to exercise them, and I'm talking about us, not the Prophet, to exercise the priesthood in righteousness and holiness and to truly become a Zion people. And the greater blessing is upon Ephraim as a result. So better stated, those who are pure Gentiles are the presiding element in this whole program, to build the New Jerusalem, hold the keys of power and help to elevate the [Lord's] people and to bring about the Lord's purposes.

He then speaks of his work among Israel and of his work among the tribes of Israel, and talks about the coming of the ten tribes, verse 26 of 3 Nephi 21, "even the tribes that have been lost." Verse 27: "Yea, the work shall commence among all the dispersed of my people," and to the gathering of them in. And then he opens up with 3 Nephi 22.

What is 3 Nephi 22? It's another complete chapter of Isaiah, it's Isaiah 54. And he says this: "And then shall that which is written come to pass." See, after you see this whole prophetic picture, the cleansing of America or the repentance of America, whichever alternative we take, the building of the New Jerusalem, the gathering in of the house of Israel, the Ten Tribes, and then we see fulfilled Isaiah 54. And what does Isaiah say?

He starts out by saying, "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child; for more shall be the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord." (3 Ne 22:1) Now, isn't that marvelous?

The Lord is a married man—I don't know whether you people know that or not. In ancient times he had a wife, and his wife was Israel. He says, "I'm married to you," and he considers himself as being in a marriage relationship with his people. For example, we say, "Prepare the bride, for the bridegroom cometh." Who is the bridegroom? Christ. Who is the bride? His wife. And who is his wife? His people. As I said, he is a married man. In ancient times, he had a wife in the sense that I'm talking about it. Let's make it clear. And that wife was Israel. What happened with her? She ran off with a traveling salesman. She forsook the Lord and went off doing things that were really critically out of line. So what did the Lord do? He didn't have to divorce her, she just left. He says in another place in Isaiah, "Where is the bill of thy divorcement? Who put you away? I didn't." She just ran off.

So the Lord then found it necessary to choose another wife. This other wife he chose was the Gentiles. The Gentiles came into the covenant and occupied the place of Israel and were the Lord's favorite people, so that when, for example Kipling writes the "Recessional," he says, "When drunk with sight of power we loose wild tongues that have not thee in awe; Such boasting as the Gentiles use, or the lesser breeds without the law." See, the English people weren't Gentiles. Those are these lesser breeds without the law. England was Israel! And the Lord chose the Gentiles and made them his wife, and we have the times of the Gentiles.

When Isaiah is talking about this, he's talking about the next development when the Gentiles forsake the Lord, and when the program swings back and he begins to gather Israel. So speaking of this time when he's going to gather Israel, this woman who in repentance and sorrow comes back to hubby, and he's going to say, "Sing, O barren"—who is he talking about? Israel. "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear." She hasn't brought forth any children through rebirth to Christ. The Jews haven't done that. Scattered Israel hasn't done that. They haven't brought forth people as Christ's wife to give to him as his children in the new covenant of regeneration and eternal life, they haven't done that.

But when Israel is brought back in and the Gentiles reject, then you'll sing a joyful song. "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child; for more shall be the children of the desolate," and who are the desolate? Israel. There is going to be more children of the desolate, "than the children of the married wife." Who is the married wife? The Gentiles.

When you get down past the redemption of Zion and the New Jerusalem or the Center Place has been built, and the ten tribes are brought in and Israel begins to be gathered from the nations of the earth in this great gathering of Israel, to this land, to make it the land of Zion, the Millennial land, the Millennial Kingdom, preparatory to that, when you do that then you sit down and you number the people of the Kingdom, and you'll find that there will be more people who will come in from ["the desolate" than from the "married bride"].

He is talking about a great transitional situation. Let me read Orson Pratt on that. This is a statement that Brother Pratt made in a discourse here in Salt Lake City, clear back in 1875. He says, "Now, I'm going to prophesy a little. The time is coming when we shall be obliged to have a government to preserve ourselves in unity, because they, the American Gentiles through the corruption that comes, will not have power to govern. For state will be divided against state, city against city, town against town, and the whole country will be in terror and confusion, mobocracy will prevail, and there will be no security through this great Republic for the lives and property of the people.

"Now, ***when that time shall come,*** we shall necessarily want to carry out the great principles pertaining to law, order, government, etc. We can magnify the Constitution and all be united without having Democrats or Republicans or all kinds of religions. We can magnify the Constitution in the spirit and the letter of it, though we are united in politics, religion, and everything else."

Then he talks about going back to Jackson County. He says, "We expect to go back there, and when we do, all this people have shall be put into the hands of the servants of the Lord and everyone will receive his stewardship at their hands without any law interfering from abroad. They will fulfill and execute every law pertaining to their stewardship and pertaining to the income and the tithing thereof. All will be fulfilled according to the letter of the law. This people will then be united, and then we will commence the fulfillment of that prayer of our Savior repeated so frequently among all Christian nations, a portion of which says, 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.'" Now, how is it in Heaven? Go to Section 76. In Heaven there is a celestial kingdom; that's where the source of law has its origin. Then there's a terrestrial kingdom, the honorable people of the earth, etc. And they are governed by a law related or centering in the celestial. And then from the celestial down to the telestial, right? In order to have the will of God done on earth as it is in Heaven, you've got to have an approximation of that. You've got to have a group of Latter-day Saints who are sanctified and who are living the celestial law, including that of consecration and stewardship, and who have the blessings of the Spirit, the endowment of glory ***and the full Zion program as the prophets have foretold it. You've got to have that.***

***Then*** you've got to have with that a saving of the Constitution. As **President Benson** said at B.Y.U. a couple of years ago, ***you don't save it back east.*** You save it by the Latter-day Saints and faithful people on this land combining together. As John Taylor said, they will come to us and they will say, "We don't know anything about your religion and we don't care to know anything about it. But you do have a secure and stable government, and we want to support that and be part of it, though we don't particularly care anything about your religion."

I was at the dedication of a welfare storehouse up in Rexburg when LeGrand Richards gave the dedicatory prayer 22 June 1952. Right in the middle of that he quoted the whole statement from John Taylor and related it to the results that will flow from the welfare program.

This will be the nucleus. That will be the beginning of the nucleus. He says, "But there will be an approximation to it here in these mountains. We will learn a great many pure principles that will enable us to carry out the law as far as we possibly can under the circumstances that we're in here. But then when you redeem Zion, there will be a full execution of that law." [*How to Live Acceptably: A Discourse* by Orson Pratt, pg 14] Now note what he says and how he quotes Isaiah 54. He's merely giving us a commentary on 3 Nephi 21 and 22. Note what he says:

"Now that order of things will continue and will spread forth ***from that nucleus in Jackson County*** and the western counties of Missouri and the eastern counties of Kansas where this people will be located, and it will spread abroad for hundreds and hundreds of miles on the right hand and upon the left, east, west, north and south, ***from that great central City,*** and all the people will be required to execute the law in all their stewardships. Then there will be a oneness and union which will continue and will spread wider and wider and become greater and greater," and note this, now, ***"until the desolate cities of the Gentiles will be inhabited by the Saints.*** Then will be fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah," and this is Isaiah 54, "in which he says," and that's the next verse here that I haven't quoted yet, ***'Thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles and make the desolate cities inhabited.'"*** [*The Deseret Evening News,* Oct. 2, 1875]

Let's go back and read Isaiah: "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child; for more are the children of the desolate," when this transition takes place, "than of the married wife. Enlarge the place of thy tent." Zion is like unto a tent, with a center place—not a center stake, a center place, an administrative hub. Then with stakes supporting it round about.

"Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes; For thou shalt break forth on the right hand," speaking of Zion

building up after his judgments upon the Gentiles, "and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." What desolate cities? ***The ones that he talked about when he said, "I will cut off the cities of thy land and throw down thy strongholds."***

(Redemption of Zion, which makes the next line make more sense)

He goes on to say, ***"Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed,"*** speaking of Zion in this time, "neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame; for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy maker, thy husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel—the God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.

"For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee." Then he goes on to say, verse 11, "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted! Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord." ***See, this is the time when the Lord himself will be there and the blessings of the Second Comforter will be open to them, and there will be great prosperity. They will build up a city and an order of things that he speaks of here.***

He goes on and says, "In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression for thou shalt not fear, and from terror for it shall not come near thee. Behold, they shall surely gather together against thee," and that's the warfare against Zion, "not by me; whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work." I'm in control of things, in other words.

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord." Now, can we begin to get this great vision of the Book of Mormon? Can you see Nephi's vision of the warfare against Zion? Can you see how Jacob amplifies it in 2 Nephi 6, how Nephi gets into it in 1 Nephi 22 and the Lord making bare his arm in the eyes of all nations? And then the Savior talking about this thing in relation to the Americas and the remnants of Israel, and takes a chapter, a section right out of the prophecy about the Assyrian and puts it in the Book of Mormon and says, "I'll give you a key to what Micah 5 is all about." It's talking about America, and the Assyrian!

Now, we have some difficult times ahead; I hate to say that. But we've got some extremely difficult times ahead. We're in the midst of a Sodom/Gomorrah situation, where the day is long gone where the Lord is going to forebear. And between now and the next few years he's going to begin to come out in judgment. And these great prophecies of Nephi will take place.

That's going to put us in a difficult situation, a very difficult situation, because we're going to have to stand against the tide of the nation. And we're going to have to stand for correct principles, and it will bring against us the warfare against Zion. This will begin this whole great scenario that will finally end up in the cleansing of Zion and the establishment of the New Jerusalem, the gathering of Israel from the four quarters of the earth, the rise of Babylon, the little horn, ***the rise of slaves against their masters*** and all of that. It's a real scenario, a real one. We are in the midst of it. And we need valiance, we need above all not just to learn theory, but we need to consecrate our lives and we need to get close to that Book of Mormon—we need to begin getting alive to what the Book of Mormon is saying! And understand it ***and apply it in our lives.*** And do what a 90 year old prophet with all the energy of his soul is trying to get us to do. Everything that he's got in the way of energy he is committing to this objective.

(Nothing has changed here eh? President Benson → President Nelson)

The thing we most need is the Book of Mormon. And if we don't learn that in the days of our peace, we simply will not survive. There simply will be no survival if we don't learn to be close to the Lord and really committed Latter-day Saints, building the Kingdom, getting the work done and done in the way that we're not just doing nuts and bolts, but that we are actually ministering the gospel and the spirit of testimony and the gifts of the Spirit in each other's lives, and having that union that only the Spirit of the Lord can bring, where you finally get to where you see eye to eye when the Lord brings again Zion.

I bear you my testimony that the Book of Mormon opens the picture in a very dreadful way—It opens the picture in a very, very dreadful way. On the other hand, it's a joyous time. It's a time when the Lord reserved some of the choicest spirits from all of his creations to be born on *this earth* to meet the challenge of this day and of this age. I bear you my testimony that we're in the midst of this and whether we like it or not, the burden is ours to meet and to handle. I just pray God that for myself I can be what I ought to be, that I can be as humble as I ought to be, and that whatever I may know, the first thing I know is obedience to my Bishop and obedience to my Stake President and obedience to the Prophet of the Lord. ***That's the first thing.***

And if anything that I have conjured up or even know to be true is contrary to that, then I'll back off and say I simply want to build the Kingdom, and you're running the show. And any way I can help, I'll help. And when we get to doing that and have the Spirit of the Lord and the spirit of humility to do that and then are patient with each other in our effort to learn the gospel and to apply it and to understand what this Book of Mormon is saying—it's a sealed book! We don't need to wait for the sealed portion, it's a sealed book! We need to be patient, but we need to learn it.

I just want you to know that I know that that Book of Mormon is the greatest miracle of modern times. I've been through that thing, I've studied the Prophet Joseph Smith professionally, I've done that ten, fifteen, twenty hours a day for 40–50 years! And the end result is that President Benson is a prophet, your Bishop has been called of God, your Stake President has been called of God, the prophet is trying to get us to the Book of Mormon, and for goodness sakes, let's finally get on the stick and do it.

May the Lord bless us to do it, I pray in Jesus' name, amen.

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**Q&A**

**Question:** Is this correct that part of the cleansing that we will see, in the chronology, will we see the countries of the north coming against America, Russia....?

**Answer:** Can I express a personal view? I think we're going to keep on with business as usual until we finally go over the cliff. I seriously believe we're headed for a national collapse financially. I've looked at the prophecies about the Elders saving the Constitution. There is nothing in them that says we're going to save it in Washington, D.C. I've been teaching that for years. I went through all of those prophecies—in fact, I personally found some that no one else had found before, and they do not indicate that we're going to go back and re-establish and stabilize the Gentile order.

What they do indicate is that in the whole trauma that takes place, we will finally lift the Constitution out of the dust after it has been trampled upon, and we will make it a part of our program. As we do, then you will offer Constitutional freedom and liberty to all people. But it will be done here, with the Latter-day Saints as a key factor, combined with other freedom-loving peoples in this land.

There will be this deterioration, and it may come over our effort to save the Constitution, but there will be a warfare against Zion. The Book of Mormon indicates that it will begin with America, and that's what Section 112 indicates—it will begin with America. America making war against the Saints. As that takes place and gets underway and the American economy goes under, then we're going to have a situation—did you see the television serial called "Amerika"? Well, that's what we're in for. It's that kind of a situation. We'll have the situation of the coming of the Assyrian, the northern army, and it will raise havoc on this land, it will cleanse this land like we've never been cleansed since the Nephites were destroyed.

Through the Lord's intervention, and this is where the prophecy on war comes in—we'll talk about that tomorrow night, where the slaves rise against their masters. Those slaves are those who are held in dominion by the Russian forces, the people of Hungary, Poland, etc.

When the Russian military might is trampling over here, what would you do if you were a freedom fighter over there? There will be a mass upheaval and uprising, and an assertion of liberty. And when that takes place, then those who are directing that force against America are going to have to withdraw their forces here. And with the power that we can muster, particularly with the powers of the holy Priesthood—as Isaiah says it, the Assyrian will be turned back by reason of the anointing—then you'll finally get that force cleared out of this land.

It will leave this land in shambles, and the Indian people will go through among the Gentiles. In the meantime, the Latter-day Saints will do their program of upholding and sustaining the Constitution, extending its blessings about, and then with the cleansing and with that program put in gear, then you'll begin the great gathering. Now, that's the scenario as I see it for about the next decade of time or so. That's the scenario, and I'm just giving you a personal view on it.

**Question:** You talk about the gathering of Israel to the New Jerusalem, here, so can I assume it's like South America, the Lamanites are all through this whole area, but there will still be members of the tribe of Judah who will gather with the gathering of Israel over there?

**Answer:** Yes. Two gatherings—let me put it this way: If you read the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants, you'll find that the Lord gave the land of Missouri to the Latter-day Saints. When the Indian people are gathered in unto the New Jerusalem, they will receive the gospel, they will receive the program, they will go back into their lands, build temples. But essentially the land in and around the center place of Zion the Lord has given to Ephraim. But the whole of America will finally become the Zion of God, and you'll establish an order of government that will finally bring sanity to Central and South America, to their politics and be the means of building a great bulwark of strength and power on the western hemisphere.

This happens before the forces of opposing—they can't cope with Zion so they finally shift and say, "Well, we're going to shut your water off at Jerusalem. You think there's going to be two great powers, we're going to shut it off!" So the forces of the Gentiles and of the northern army, or the Assyrian, or the little horn, go against Jerusalem. And that will be the great final winding up scene, where the Lord himself will finally intervene to save the Jews.

**Question:** And we'll have peace, almost a Millennium, over here with warfare raging in the rest of the world?

**Answer:** That's right. Many of our young people will live to see the Savior of the world and to have a personal association with him. That's what the prophetic picture implies. We don't know the full schedule of years—I'm not trying to say, but we are close enough to that, to where that can be said closely.

See, we get the idea that the second coming is the great world appearance—no. I want to talk about that later in the week. He will come to Zion, he'll come to his Temple, he'll come to Adam-ondi-Ahman. There are several major appearances that take place here, and this preliminary to that great world appearance. We've got something to do, my brothers and sisters. We have a Kingdom to establish in righteousness, and that takes the sanctification of the people and the understanding of what the Lord has said! We've got to finally get on the stick and do it and quit fiddling around, and get our home teaching done and our ministering and building the Spirit of the Lord and help sanctify and forgive each other of the stresses and the conflicts, and build that strength and that union and that understanding in our midst that we need to be a Zion people. We've got a prophet of the Lord who is just begging us to do that and to use the Book of Mormon to that end. Now, the Lord bless you.

# Prophecies of Isaiah

**Taken and adapted from Lectures 13 & 14**
**NEPHI–THE KEY TO ISAIAH**

The Book of Mormon is a summarization of a thousand-year history, of which the prophetic picture centers around Zion. These prophets weren't abridging and adding things to the Book of Mormon willy nilly—they had the prophetic picture of Zion, they understood it and everything was added to it for the purpose of expounding upon that vision of Zion. No one preached more about that prophetic picture than Isaiah, so the Book of Mormon becomes the guidebook to truly understand Isaiah and by virtue of that, Zion. This lecture series by Brother Hyrum Andrus goes over that.

> That vision of Zion has been given to the righteous of all ages of time. It was given to ancient Israel, it was given to the Nephites. I'm sure it was given to the ten tribes.

I would just like to bear my testimony to what Brother Hyrum Andrus is saying here—that the vision of Zion is something that the righteous of all ages can acquire, and at last it has come to us. Or has it? I think a large part of going over this subject is also making sure that we have the right vision of Zion—that we see it as the Lord sees it. Because, as Hyrum Andrus said,

> believe me, the Lord sees it differently than we see it. He's not too happy with many members of the Church—just literally is not too happy with many members of the Church. We are walking in darkness at noonday! And he sees us entirely differently.

When members preach on this subject in the Church you are going to see two different approaches—the one being the approach that Brother Hyrum Andrus put forth here, the same that I put forth, the Lord is not happy with us. We could have redeemed and built Zion at any time, and the Lord is waiting on us and is not happy in our lack of effort and desire. Once members understand that, the only logical things to teach from that point forward would be (1) what are we doing wrong, and (2) how can we fix it and move forward.

The other approach is to praise the Church and the members for its many accomplishments and to preach some figurative, spiritualized Zion that is somehow going to rise up from the midst of wicked Babylon. This second approach naturally leads people to pat themselves on the back and to be content with their current situation and trajectory. If one were to see the second approach, and if one believed that it was not of God, and one was writing a book specifically designed to help prevent it, how would one describe that second approach?

"All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well."

Right off the bat, can we not see why the Lord would be so upset with us? We've taken the Book of Mormon, which was literally designed to prevent us from falling into this position, and yet here we are exactly in this position.

If I wrote a handbook for my son on how to not get zapped by electricity, and the very first thing I wrote was, "Don't run around in a storm holding something metallic," and then I looked outside and saw my son running outside in a storm holding something metallic, my first reaction would be that he is mocking me and/or he is in a state of rebellion. If I went out and talked to him and found that my son was in a good mood and loved me and thought that he was pleasing me, my next thought would be, "He never read my book." What happens when you find out next that your son claims to love the book and reads a chapter of it every night—what goes through your head next? And then when you find out that your son hosts classes that he charges people money for to help others understand the book... There are some levels here that I hope people can start to visualize and understand why a loving Heavenly Father would be upset with us.

> Let's first of all give a few *keys* of understanding, of how to approach this challenging study of Isaiah so that you can understand it, so that it unfolds and so that we can get some vision and some relationship of what he is saying to our day and to our time, and begin to fulfill our responsibility in the great vision that he had.
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> O.K., point number one: Isaiah spoke to all Israel in all generations of time. That means that the Jews could read Isaiah, and he wrote in such an ingenious way that the Jews could say that he is talking to us. The Nephites could read Isaiah, the same passage, and he wrote in such an ingenious way that the Nephites could say, "He is talking to us." And he did that for all twelve tribes of Israel for all generations of time down to the modern age. He writes by revelation, not just to one person, to one group, but he is writing to the whole.
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> For example, here in 1 Nephi 19, Nephi's commentary on the subject as he explains. He says: "I did read many things unto them [v. 23] which were written in the books of Moses; but that I might more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer I did read unto them that which was written by the prophet Isaiah; for I did liken all scripture unto us." Now, what is he doing? He is reading Isaiah and saying that Isaiah is writing to us. He is applying scripture, all of it, to himself.
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> He goes on and says, "Wherefore I spake unto them, saying: Hear ye the words of the prophet, ye who are a remnant of the house of Israel, a branch who have been broken off; hear ye the words of the prophet, which were written unto all the house of Israel, and liken them unto yourselves." Now there is a vital and important key to Isaiah. When people read Isaiah, a lot of times they want to go back 600 or 700 years B.C. and find out what Isaiah said to that generation. And that's all right, that's the classic, historic approach to the subject.
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> Then you get a mastery of Hebrew and all the languages that relate to the world at that time, and when you study Isaiah, you just study him in relation to 700 B.C., and you say that's what Isaiah is all about. Now, that is not what Isaiah is all about. It is true that he wrote to his day and to his age and was a prophet to his generation, but his heart was so filled with a desire to see Zion and understand it that the Lord finally opened that vision to him, and that vision was way down in the *last days,* down in our day and the time that is yet future. And he saw it. Then he wrote in a revelatory way, in such a way that that great challenge to build Zion, which is the challenge of all Israel in all generations of time, that great challenge was made applicable to each tribe of Israel of the whole twelve tribes and to each generation of Israel from his day on down.
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> But there was a focus, that final focus while he wrote to all generations and to all Israel. *That final focus is our day.*

What Hyrum Andrus is going over here is truly a key to understand not only Isaiah but once again Zion. Zion could have been built in any generation, even before there were tribes, way back with Moses. The call was constantly to build up Zion and the people were constantly uninterested. It's important to note that, once again, Latter-day Saints weren't interested and they didn't qualify for Zion, not because they didn't love enough or they judged too much or because they were intolerant, but because they were comfortable in their position, because they loved the world more than they loved God.

**Doctrine and Covenants 121**

**34** Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen?

**35** Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world,

Because they believed that Zion could come forth from the midst of Babylon. They wanted to stay comfortably at the bottom of the mountain and bring the Savior down off of the mountain to them. No work and no separation—no leaving behind Babylon. And do we have Zion today? No! We do not have Zion today. Which means what? The prophetic picture of Zion is yet future. Meaning, what Isaiah and all these prophets saw hasn't happened yet.

An interesting side note:

**President Russell M. Nelson**

"The time is coming when those who do not obey the Lord will be separated from those who do (see Doctrine and Covenants 86:1–7)." ("The Future of the Church," *Ensign,* April 2020.)

"We live in the day that "our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation." We have front-row seats to ***witness live*** what the prophet Nephi saw ***only in vision***…" ("Hear Him," General Conference, April 2020.)

"In coming days, we will see the ***greatest*** manifestations of the Savior's power that the world has ***ever*** seen." (Overcome the World and Find Rest, October 2022.)

**President Henry B. Eyring**

"You sisters, your daughters, your granddaughters, and the women you have nurtured will be at the heart of creating that society of people who will join in glorious association with the Savior." ("Sisters in Zion," General Conference, October 2020.)

Going back to the Book of Mormon and providing an example, let's turn to:

3 Nephi 20, where the Savior is speaking and giving us some insights in relation to Isaiah. He says this, verse 11–13: "Ye remember that I spake unto you, and said that when the words of Isaiah should be fulfilled—behold they are written, ye have them before you, therefore search them—And verily, verily, I say unto you, that when they shall be fulfilled, then is the fulfilling of the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people, O house of Israel." See, that says something. And he says, "And then shall the remnants, which shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, be gathered in from the east and from the west, and from the south and from the north; and they shall be brought to the knowledge of the Lord their God, who hath redeemed them." Isaiah concerns primarily what generation of time then? He has been the hope of all Israel in all generations, and they can apply that which he wrote because they are Israel. And true Israel is Zion. And he wrote to them and the challenge to build Zion and to have the hope for it and to live for it and to build their lives on the foundation.

But Isaiah knew that that great hope would only come to consummation in the last days. So when you read Isaiah, don't worry about 700 B.C. so much; that's fine if you want to do that. But read it like the morning newspaper. That's key number one: He wrote to all Israel in all generations with the focus on the *last days* when that great vision of Zion of which he speaks will be fulfilled.

Another important key. That's one. Another one is this, closely related to it. That is that there is such a thing as multiple fulfillments of prophecy, fulfilled in more than one time. For example, let me turn to the Prophet Joseph's Inspired Translation or revision of Matthew 24, found in the Pearl of Great Price. Matthew 24, as the Prophet gave it to us with the additional insights of divine revelation, concerns two prophetic periods. It has its basis in the teachings of Christ to his disciples. They came to him, and here in the latter part of verse 4, it indicates they wanted to know two things.

They said, "What is the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world, or the destruction of the wicked." Now, that's one thing, but before that they said, "Tell us when shall these things be which thou hast said concerning the destruction of the temple, and the Jews." So while Matthew 24 is the great prophetic statement of the last days, it concerns two things. It concerns Christ's prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple there at Jerusalem and the scattering of the Jews throughout the world. That part of the prophecy runs through to about verse 25.

In that prophecy, Jesus addressing himself not to the last days, but addressing himself to those Jewish people and to the destruction of their polity, their city, their government, their program. As he does that, he tells them something about the difficulties that will be associated with it. He says, "Many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold; but he that remaineth steadfast and is not overcome, the same shall be saved."

And then in verse 12 he says this, and this is the point I want to come to: "When you, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, then you shall stand in the holy place; whoso readeth let him understand." Daniel the prophet gives us a prophecy concerning what he calls the "abomination of desolation" as it applies to Jerusalem.

When Jesus is talking to his disciples about the then imminent destruction of their own country which was fulfilled in 68 to 70 A.D., when the Roman general, Titus, brought a Roman army, surrounded Jerusalem, and set up the siege that finally overthrew that city, there were a million Jews that were massacred. Women became so hungry they ate their own children, and it was literally a bloody orgy. Josephus, contemporary with that period of time, tells us quite a bit about it.

The Savior says, "When you, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, then stand in holy places." Then he warned his disciples, "Then let them who are in Judea flee into the mountains; Let him who is on the housetop flee, and not return to take anything out of his house; Neither let him who is in the field return back to take his clothes." (Mat 24:15–18) You just get out of the country!

"And wo unto them that are with child, and unto them that give suck in those days; Therefore, pray ye the Lord that your flight be not in the winter," which would make it difficult, "neither on the Sabbath day," because you can only take so many steps on the Sabbath. And you're running along and there's a Roman soldier after you and you are counting them off—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, and you've come to the end of how many you can take! And he's still on your heels! So pray, then, that it doesn't take place in the winter or on the Sabbath.

Those Jewish people heard that, and Jesus gave them a sign. He said, "When ye shall see Jerusalem encompassed by the armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." So the Jewish Christians, when they saw the Roman armies under Titus come, remembered Christ's prophecy and remembered the sign he had given to them, and they got out of the country, and they didn't get killed. But the Jewish people who were there remained, set up a defense, the Roman armies besieged the city, and a devastating massacre took place.

The point I want to make, though, is that Daniel talked about this. When Jesus shifts gears and he talks about the last days, he talks about conditions that will take place in the last days. He says this (verse 12): "And again, because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." All right, so here's a repeat of one aspect of the prophecy, it's going to take place again. "And again, the Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." (verse 14) Or the destruction of the wicked.

Note this now, And again shall the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet be fulfilled. (see verse 15) There will come a time, then, when the armies of all nations, particularly those of Babylon and of the Assyrian, the latter-day Assyrian, or Gog and Magog from the north, the forces that come from the north that Ezekiel describes in Ezekiel 38 and 39, and they'll set up a siege against the city of Jerusalem. And again the city will be besieged and again the city will capitulate. The only difference is that this time when the city capitulates, Christ will then stand on the Mount of Olives. And that will change the ballgame, that will change it.

But there are two fulfillments of the Abomination of Desolation. Daniel makes one prophecy, and it is fulfilled twice. What I'm saying here in relation to Isaiah is that Isaiah does the same thing. Isaiah writes in such a way that there is a multiple fulfillment of what he says, particularly for his day and for ours.

When Christ was giving all of his warnings and teachings to the generation that he was speaking to, he gave them a sign to know when the Abomination of Desolation would be fulfilled and that was "when you see Jerusalem encompassed by enemies." These prophecies will be fulfilled again and the means by which we can identify them is also the same. Jesus identified a generation and then gave that generation a sign to look for. For us today Jesus gave us a generation and a means of identifying the generation and then he gave a sign for that generation to look for. The generation was "the generation in which the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled" and the sign to look for was a desolating sickness. Both of which have transpired.

Key passages in the Book of Mormon regarding Isaiah are found in 3 Nephi 23. The Savior here is speaking of Isaiah. It says this, beginning with verse 1:

"And now, behold, I say unto you, that ye ought to search these things. Yea, a commandment I give unto you that ye search these things diligently; for great are the words of Isaiah." Now, if the Savior would say that to the Nephite saints, what do you think he would say to us, where the prophecies of Isaiah have their focus in our day! What would he say to us?

Now, the key verse is verse 3: "And all things that he spake have been and shall be, even according to the words which he spoke." Do you see the multiple picture there? "All things that he spake *have been* and *shall be*." In other words, some things have been fulfilled and they are due to be fulfilled again. So you read Isaiah understanding this.

In 2 Nephi 6 we read, "And now, behold, I would speak unto you concerning things which are, and which *are to come;* wherefore, I will read you the words of Isaiah."

Confirming, once again, that the words of Isaiah both have been *and will be* fulfilled.

So we read Isaiah, and we read him as it pertains to us. That's another important key.

A third important key deals with the idea of symbols. Here is Isaiah, 700 some-odd years B.C., and you have an assignment to write by revelation to all Israel in all generations of time, with a focus on things that are going to take place 2500, 2600, 2700 years later. And how are you going to communicate your ideas? You don't know their language, you are going to write to all Israel. So, typical of the Hebraic way of communication, you write with symbols. Symbols become highly important, and symbols are highly important to the understanding of scriptural passages.

For example, let me turn to the book of Revelation, chapter 11, and just read you something as an illustration of what I mean. This chapter deals with the two prophets who are going to be raised up in Jerusalem at the time of this abomination of desolation when it takes place, and who will have power like Enoch of old and like Elijah, through the power of the holy priesthood, and who, through that power, will hold in abeyance for a time the Gentile and heathen hordes that come against Jerusalem. These two prophets, though, as the city is overrun, will eventually be killed, and their bodies will lie in the streets. The Gentiles and heathens will send letters of commendation and gladness and joy about them back and forth, and say, "Let's have a celebration and then let's go in and mop the rest of those guys up."

While they are in that planning stage of festivities, the trumpet sounds, the resurrection of the righteous takes place, just as Christ stands upon the Mount, and since these two prophets are righteous, they are going to be resurrected. So they get right up there off the street to the astonishment of many. And their resurrection takes place, they ascend, Christ stands on the Mount of Olives, devastation, cataclysm happens, the Mount of Olives cleaves asunder, part of it moving to the north and part to the south, a huge valley is created into which the Jews flee. In the sacred recesses of that valley, Christ makes his appearance to them and discloses himself as Jesus of Nazareth whom their fathers crucified.

Note what John the Revelator says about that. In verse 8: "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city," speaking of the two prophets, "which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." Where was Christ crucified? Jerusalem. And what does the Lord use as a symbol to designate that city? We call it the holy city. There's nothing holy about it! It's holy because Christ was there, but he got crucified. It's holy because other prophets were there; and they were stoned and martyred. And it's holy because it's the center of prophetic history and prophetic vision, but so far as the inhabitants are concerned, the Lord who sees things a little more accurately, calls them Sodom. What does that mean? And he calls them Egypt. And what does that mean? The flesh pots. So he calls Jerusalem, not the holy city, he calls Jerusalem Sodom and Egypt.

He uses a couple of names that apply, and they are symbols. Egypt is a symbol of the flesh pots. Sodom is a symbol, and we have Sodom in America. America is Sodom. It's that kind of thing that he uses to designate that. He speaks through and by symbols, and you see the symbol and then you associate it. For example, in ancient days, the Lord's work centered in Jerusalem. So Jerusalem becomes a symbol. In ancient days there was a little kingdom made up of the Edomites, and they were a worldly kingdom. From the kingdom of Edom we got the word "Idumea," which means the world. And the Lord uses that term in the scriptures.

Let me give you an illustration of the use of Jerusalem.. This is Isaiah, chapter 3, but it's found in the Book of Mormon in 2 Nephi 13 verse 1. He says, "For behold, the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem, and from Judah, the stay and the staff, the whole staff of bread, and the whole stay of water." Now, that passage pertains to our day, not just related to our day. He is speaking of our day. That is our day, but he is using the symbol Jerusalem. The symbol Jerusalem in our day means what? Where is the center of the Lord's work? What city is it? You just use the initials "S.L.C." and you've got it! That's the center of the Lord's work.

And then the land associated with Jerusalem was the land of Judah. The land associated with the modern Jerusalem, i.e., S.L.C., is what land? It's the land of America. So Isaiah 3 is talking about, using symbols, Judah and Jerusalem, i.e., Salt Lake City and the land associated with that center of the Lord's work. We'll come back to that in a little bit.

Another key to the understanding of Isaiah is found in 2 Nephi 25. Here in verse 4, Nephi commenting on the subject, makes this statement: "Wherefore, hearken, O my people, which are of the house of Israel, and give ear unto my words; for because the words of Isaiah are not plain unto you, nevertheless they are plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy. But I give unto you a prophecy, according to the spirit which is in me; wherefore I shall prophesy according to the plainness which hath been with me from the time that I came out from Jerusalem...." Let me add this clarification. The spirit of prophecy includes an understanding of what has been revealed. One must under-

stand Nephi's vision, for example, in order to understand Isaiah. You've got to catch Nephi's vision of the last days.

That becomes a key of insight, and it helps you to get the spirit of prophecy and to understand what Isaiah is talking about. You can't understand the Bible without understanding the Book of Mormon.

The spirit of prophecy cannot be had if we don't take the time to read and understand the scriptures we already have. The spirit of prophecy, revelation, inspiration, etc. are all gifts of the spirit, which means without the Holy Ghost it is impossible to possess those gifts. We also know that we do not qualify for the Holy Ghost if we wilfully refuse to read the scriptures and prophecies at our fingertips:

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

"Our right to guidance from Holy Ghost.

"We have the right to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, but we cannot have that guidance, if we wilfully refuse to consider the revelations that have been given to help us to understand and to guide us in the light and truth of the everlasting gospel. We cannot hope to have that guidance when we refuse to consider these great revelations which mean so much to us both temporally and spiritually. Now if we find ourselves in this condition of unbelief or unwillingness to seek for the light and the knowledge which the Lord has placed within our reach, then we are liable or in danger of being deceived by evil spirits, the doctrines of devils, and the teachings of men. And when these false influences are presented before us, we will not have the distinguishing understanding by which we can segregate them and know that they are not of the Lord. And so we may become prey unto the ungodly, to the vicious, to the cunning, to the craftiness of men."

(*Doctrines of Salvation,* p. 43)

You can't understand the gathering of Israel as foretold by Ezekiel and Jeremiah and Isaiah and others, unless you get to the Book of Mormon. And it becomes the key to revelation and knowledge. Similarly, Isaiah can only be understood by understanding Nephi. Nephi's great prophecy, is the main prophetic theme of the Book of Mormon concerning the last days. In fact, it's almost the *only* prophetic theme in the Book of Mormon about the last days.

I can't stress this enough—that Nephi's vision, the Book of Mormon, etc. is what is necessary to understand Isaiah, not some Hebrew scholar. And what did Nephi have to say about that approach?

**2 Nephi 25**

**1** Now I, Nephi, do speak somewhat concerning the words which I have written, which have been spoken by the mouth of Isaiah. For behold, Isaiah spake many things which were hard for many of my people to understand; for they know not concerning the manner of prophesying among the Jews.

"SEEEeeee! This is why we need a Jewish SCHOLAR to teach us the ways of prophesying among the Jews or we won't understand Isaiah! DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?!"

**2** For I, Nephi, have not taught them many things concerning the manner of the Jews; for their works were works of darkness, and their doings were doings of abominations.

"Well, then, how are we supposed to read and understand Isaiah then, MICAH! If not by understanding the Jews by buying the priestcraft of THE Jewish Scholar! HUH MIIIICAHHH?! Got an answer for THAT!?"

**4** Wherefore, hearken, O my people, which are of the house of Israel, and give ear unto my words; for because the words of Isaiah are not plain unto you, nevertheless they are plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy.

The answer is that Nephi made it very clear that the spirit of prophecy is what is needed to understand Isaiah, not an understanding of the Jews.

So to summarize it to the present: Number one, he spoke to all Israel in all generations. Two, there was a focus on the last days. When Isaiah really comes out and is really fulfilled, it will be in our day and our time. Three, there are multiple fulfillments; his words are fulfilled more than once. He could say something about Judah and Jerusalem that would apply to his day. But since it applies to our day in the sense of focus, then Nephi puts it in there with a very clear statement that those chapters in the Book of Mormon weren't included as a history lesson. They were included because they relate directly to our day. So when you read them, read them for our day. Four, he writes in symbols. Five, you have to have the spirit of prophecy, which indicates that you need also to understand the prophetic vision of men like Nephi and others.

And then Isaiah begins to be understood, literally. It begins to be understandable. You can read it and say, "Hey, that stuff makes sense!" And it not only makes sense, believe me it has some of the most sacred and significant disclosures in it of any book in the Book of Mormon! It really has. And it is covered up until you get into it and see it.

And once you do see it—once you understand the redemption of Zion and the building of New Jerusalem—you will never be able to unsee it, and you will see it everywhere.

With that, let's take Nephi's works and begin to go through. Of the 19 chapters of Isaiah included, the first two that are put together are Isaiah 48 and 49. You find them in 1 Nephi 20 and 21. Let's go back, though, in our reading and let's read Nephi's introduction to them.

Let's begin in the introduction with verse 15 of 1 Nephi 19: "Nevertheless, when that day cometh, saith the prophet, that they no more turn aside their hearts against the Holy One of Israel," and he's talking about the Jewish people here and Israel in general, "then will he remember the covenants which he made to their fathers. Yea, then will he remember the isles of the sea; yea, and all the people who are of the house of Israel, will I gather in, saith the Lord, according to the words of the prophet Zenos, from the four quarters of the earth. Yea, and all the earth shall see the salvation of the Lord, saith the prophet; every nation, kindred, tongue and people shall be blessed."

The Lord "making bare his arm in the eyes of all nations." That simply means that he is going to do for many nations like he did for ancient Egypt. When he delivered ancient Israel out of Egypt, he made bare his arm before that nation, with great power and with plagues and with judgments. Then as Israel left Egypt, the cloud and smoke by day and the pillar of fire by night went before and after them and preserved them from the Egyptian army. And it was a display of divine power that finally consummated in the dividing of the Red Sea and the marching of the Israelites through and Pharaoh sending his horsemen and his chariots and soldiers through to get in the middle and have the walls cave in on them. That was making bare his arm in the eyes of that nation.

And in the latter-day, there is a day of power. As David puts it, "In the day of thy power shall thy people be willing." (see Psalms 110:3.) Let me give you the equivalent of that in Section 90, beginning with verse 9, where he is talking about the gospel program in our dispensation and our day. Speaking to the First Presidency he says, "Through your administration—they," that is, the Church, "may receive the word, and through their administration the word may go forth unto the ends of the earth, unto the Gentiles first, and then, behold, and lo, they shall turn unto the Jews. And then cometh the day when the arm of the Lord shall be revealed in power in convincing the nations, the heathen nations," and these are the non-Judaeo-Christians, "and the house of Joseph"—the great Indian nations of Central and South America and here in North America, "convincing them of the gospel of their salvation.

"For it shall come to pass *in that day,"* and that's not quite yet, but we're getting in there, "...in that day, that every man shall hear the fulness of

the gospel in his own tongue, and in his own language, through those who are ordained unto this power, by the administration of the Comforter, shed forth upon them for the revelation of Jesus Christ." There is going to come a day when the most popular topic discussed on this earth is Mormonism. There is going to come a day when that topic is so pertinent and so vital to people that they will divide to one side or the other. And there is going to come a day when there will be a great division of all people on this earth over the issue of the restored gospel and the Zion program which is being built. Nephi sees that. Nephi talks about that, and this is the day when Isaiah's prophecy will be fulfilled.

He goes on here in his introduction. Let's move from verses 15 through 17, to verses 22–24. "Now it came to pass that I, Nephi, did teach my brethren these things; and it came to pass that I did read many things to them, which were engraven upon the plates of brass, that they might know concerning the doings of the Lord in other lands, among people of old. And I did read many things unto them," and I quoted this one here a minute ago from the book of Moses—"But that I might more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer I did read unto them that which was written by the prophet Isaiah, for I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning.

"Wherefore, I spake unto them, saying: Hear ye the words of the prophet, ye who are a remnant of the house of Israel, a branch who have been broken off; hear ye the words of the prophet, which were written unto all the house of Israel, and liken them unto yourselves, that ye may have hope as well as your brethren from whom ye have been broken off; for after this manner has the prophet written." And then he includes Isaiah 48 and 49, and he writes himself. And then to get corroborating testimony, he puts 2 chapters of Isaiah in there. And he later puts a lot more in there. He says, "Now look! This stuff relates to you people. And it is going to be fulfilled in the last days. Now read it!" So with that, let's read a little from Isaiah 48, 1 Nephi 20.

Before we do that, though, let's pick up the commentary, because I want you to get both ends. You've got the introduction, and now let's talk here a little bit about the commentary, then we'll come back to Isaiah 48.

Having included Isaiah 48 and 49, then 1 Nephi 22 is a commentary. It is Nephi's inspired, revelatory commentary on these two chapters. So if you want to know what these 2 chapters are about and you want to make it easy on yourself, then go read the commentary. Go read what Nephi says. In the commentary, he speaks of Israel, he speaks of the Lord raising up a great Gentile nation. Then in verse 6, he says, "Nevertheless, after they shall be nursed by the Gentiles, and the Lord has lifted up his hand upon the Gentiles and set them up for a standard...."

What is a "standard"? A standard is something by which you measure something, is it not? If you have the "New Standard Dictionary," that's the latest in definition of words. Zion is to be an ensign, and that's something that you stick up so that people can see. In ancient times when they had military campaigns, they had an ensign and you converged on and made the attack according to the position of the ensign. It is something to which you gathered.

A standard is something by which you measure things. I have here the standard works of the Church. We don't worry about personal opinion. If you have some differences of understanding in doctrine, you get the ruler. A ruler is a standard. If you have an argument on how long it is from over here to over there, you get yourself a yardstick and measure it. Then that's the end of the argument. If you want to do the same in regard to doctrine and truth, then you take this ruler, this thing we call the "standard works," and if the standard works teaches it, that's the end of basic doctrine, is it not? That's the end of it.

Or at least it should be. There are many today who, even after being shown the standard, still deny it, and then when told they will be held accountable for that and will be damned for teaching anything that is not doctrinal, they say, "I know you are but what am I? I'm allowed to privately interpret scripture as much as I like and I'll meet you in Zion..."

What Brother Hyrum Andrus here is teaching here is not only important for understanding Zion in a literal sense, but also how we become Zion in a very pragmatic sense. If we are not one, which includes our minds, we will not be able to build Zion. If anyone is teaching that becoming one in mind and doctrine is not important, they either (a) don't know what they are talking about, (b) are practicing priestcraft and are simply selling a narrative (and with priestcraft, the more the merrier—there is almost an unspoken rule to allow differences in doctrines and opinions, almost like a cease-fire, so that they can all practice their priestcrafts unmolested), or (c) are not serious about Zion.

As Brother Hyrum Andrus puts it:

And you don't say, "Well, I've got my opinion and you've got your opinion," you say, "To the law and the testimony," just like Isaiah would say, "To the law and testimony!" What do the scriptures say? To what do they bear witness?

Zion is going to be a standard. But a standard in that sense needs to be understood. We talk about Mount Zion. We had a question that came up this afternoon that I didn't pick up until after it was over with. Someone asked about Mount Zion. Well, the word "mount"—what does the word "mount" mean? It means a couple of things. It is symbolic of a mountain, which is strength and power, it's symbolic of that. But there is another view of it that is important.

If you get upon your mount and ride, what are you doing? Well, you have a horse and you mount the horse, you ride it. Your mount is that on which you sit. Your mount is that which is your foundation. Mount Zion is Zion established upon her mount. And what is the mount of Zion? What is that on which Zion rests? The answer is the House of the Lord, the sacred covenants relating to the holy order of God. The sacred covenants of obedience to God, of sacrifice, of the gospel, of virtue and holiness, the sacred covenant of consecration, committing your life, that sacred order that pertains to the order of kings and priests, and those sacred powers that deal with the sealing powers of the holy priesthood. Those are the mount—that's the thing on which Zion is established.

Also known as celestial law, which is what we go over in the School of Joseph's Boys.

Zion has an economic order that is called the law of consecration and stewardship. It has its basis in the house of the Lord. Zion has a political system, a political order of kings, like King Benjamin and Mosiah, righteous kings who had their rule of authority from the temple, not merely a secular potentate. Their rule of authority was centered in the covenants of the temple.

When Zion is built upon her mount and fully established with the sealing powers and the endowment of glory that comes from yielding obedience and establishing those sacred ordinances in our lives and building up that order so that there is a cloud and smoke by day and a pillar of fire by night over every dwelling place, then Zion becomes Mount Zion.

We have some interesting uses of "Zion" all over the western states. Zion this and Zion that, and they are no more Zion than a Gentile institution. They are not established with glory and power. They've taken the name with probably good intent, but they are not Zion in the sense of the order of things on which they are built. Hopefully they'll do a better job and be more honest and efficient in righteousness than others. But if you are going to have Zion you first of all have to have a temple for the foundation. It has to be based in the house of the Lord.

Then when it is based in the house of the Lord and the society outside the temple conforms totally and completely with the covenants within the temple so that the society is an extension of those sacred covenants and so there are sanctified people who have entered the house of the Lord and received sacred ordinances and who have received the blessings of the holy priesthood in fulness and in sealing power, and

the blessings of the Spirit are poured out, like the cloud and smoke by day and the pillar of fire by night, then you have Mount Zion. And then you have a standard and not until then do you have a standard.

Which means what? It's easy to point to Zion National Bank and say "this is not Zion" as Brother Hyrum Andrus said. It's also easy to come out and teach what Zion has to have in order to be Zion and then passively say "and we won't be Zion until this point". What am I getting at? We're not Zion. What Brother Andrus just taught, very passive aggressively, that yes Zion National Bank isn't Zion but do you know what else isn't Zion? Us. We're not Zion. We won't be Zion until we live outside the temple what we commit to live while inside the temple including the law of consecration, celestial marriage etc. And we will know when we have truly reached that point of being Zion when the Lord will not be able to hide his presence from us any longer and we will experience upon every dwelling place the fire and cloud. What we have now is a cheap knockoff substitute like Pharaoh's serpents compared to what will transpire.

And the Lord says he will lift up his hand upon the Gentiles, and in this sense he is talking about those of the Gentiles who embrace the gospel, and set them up for a standard.

Nephi tells us how that standard is going to be established. We read in 1 Nephi 14 that there are two churches and they are the abominable church and the church of the Lamb. The church of the Lamb more specifically defined consists of the righteous Latter-day Saints, those who have applied the gospel, so much so that they have the gifts and the revelations and the spiritual endowments of the Spirit with them.

As this time of opposition comes against them, then Nephi suggest that the saints of the Lamb of God were endowed with the spirit and power of God in great glory. That is building the standard. This standard of which Isaiah speaks and which Nephi comments about here is raised in adversity. Isaiah chapter 1 verse 27 says, "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment and her converts with righteousness," and he is going to restore things as they were in ancient times.

In this time when we begin to do this, then Zion becomes a standard out of adversity. While you may be sitting in the dust, and there will be those who will be driven and smitten, whole communities of Latter-day Saints, in the warfare against Zion, nevertheless, those who are faithful and those who are righteous, though they may sit in the dust, will enjoy Pentecost. And they will have the gifts of the Spirit, and they will have the revelations of the Spirit, and they will have the power of God in great glory begin to descend upon them. And they will get over the complacency that we see manifest too often among our people today. And those who really commit themselves to the Lord and purify their hearts and learn what ministering is all about and what service in the Church is all about, and do it with a love out of the abundance of their hearts, with the Spirit of the Lord as the basis of their lives, they will begin to be sanctified, they'll begin to get the endowment of glory. And when they do that, Zion will be raised as an ensign and a standard, which we do not yet have.

So he tells them, "We're going to raise up this standard!" Then he explains to them concerning making bare his arm in the eyes of all nations, 1 Nephi 22:10–11: "And I would, my brethren, that ye should know that all the kindreds of the earth cannot be blessed unless he shall make bare his arm in the eyes of the nations. Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to make bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations, in bringing about his covenants and his gospel unto those who are of the house of Israel."

Isaiah 48, then, we've seen in the light of Nephi's introduction, Nephi's commentary. Isaiah 48 deals with latter-day Israel and her redemption. Let me just read an excerpt or two out of it. This is chapter 20 of 1 Nephi. Let's just pick up an excerpt or two to catch the idea. Verse 1: "Hearken and hear this, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, or out of the waters of baptism," and that's not in the King James version. "...who swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, yet they swear not in truth nor in righteousness.

"Nevertheless, they call themselves of the holy city, but they do not stay themselves upon the God of Israel, who is the Lord of Hosts; yea, the Lord of Hosts is his name." Now, applied to us, what does that say? What does that say to the Latter-day Saint? Let's read it and apply it to us. What does it say? What do we do? We "swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, yea they swear not in truth nor in righteousness. Nevertheless, they call themselves of the holy city." You might—I don't want to say it, but you draw your conclusions as to what city that is.

Brother Hyrum Andrus won't say it, but I've already said it—I've already pointed out how he passive-aggressively shafted everyone claiming to already be Zion; now he's just pointing to scripture, narrowing it down to a single city that blasphemes itself by calling itself Zion the New Jerusalem. And any and all who parrot that same idea likewise blaspheme themselves. Salt Lake City is not the holy city and will never become the New Jerusalem. Period.

So he's talking to all Israel with a focus on our time. Let's turn to verse 10: "For behold, I have refined thee." Now he's talking about this cleansing that's going to come to Zion. "I have refined thee. I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." He's not talking about all the members of the Church, he's talking of those who bring forth Zion, and he has chosen, he has refined them, and he says, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, yea, for mine own sake will I do this, for I will not suffer my name to be polluted, and I will not give my glory unto another." So he's going to clean house and refine his people.

Let's turn to verses 20 and 21: "Go ye forth of Babylon," and this is talking about the great gathering now, when it takes place. "Flee from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter to the end of the earth; say ye: The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob. And they thirsted not; he led them through the deserts; he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them; he clave the rock also and the waters gushed out." Now, what is that talking about?

Let me see if I can put it a little more fully in focus. When Zion has been cleansed and refined on this land, and this will be done through judgment and warfare against Zion and the coming of the modern Assyrian and all of that kind of thing, and Zion is raised as an ensign.

The standard is finally raised. Then Nephi, as he sees other churches, he sees the church of the Lamb of God throughout all the world, and he sees multitudes from the nations of the Gentiles make war against those people, the Saints of God.

Then he sees that these people begin to gather to Zion. That's when the whole of America will be made the Zion of God. And it will be a marvelous thing. We think we've got a great number when we've got 6 or 8 million people in the Church. Why, that's just a good-sized modern city. But the time is going to come in the not-too-far-distant future when we're going to make the whole of America the Zion of God. And there is a big bulk of Latter-day Saints right here in this room who will live to see that happen.

When that takes place, and this great gathering of which the Book of Mormon speaks, begins and gets underway, when that takes place these people will wade through much affliction. Some of them will go through deserts. And the Lord will lead them like he led ancient Israel. And, as he says, "They thirsted not; he led them through the deserts, he caused the waters to flow out of the rocks for them, he claved the rock also, and the waters gushed out." And notwithstanding he had done all this, "and greater also, there is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked." [1 Ne 20:21, Isaiah 48:21] Those are some of the circumstances in the gathering of Israel when Isaiah's prophecies are fulfilled.

In chapter 49, which is 1 Nephi, chapter 21, he is talking of Israel in the latter-day. Verse one, he says, "Hearken, O ye house of Israel, all ye that are broken off and are driven out, because of the wickedness of the pastors of my people; yea, all ye that are broken off, that are scattered abroad, who are of my people, O house of Israel. Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken ye people from far; the Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand...."

Verses 2–7: "He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me; And said unto me; Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified."

He says, "And then I said," and this is the Savior's reflection and maybe challenges for discouragement as he fulfilled his mission as One who was despised of men and whom they didn't recognize and whom they spat upon and finally crucified, he says, "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught and in vain; surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God. And now, saith the Lord—that formed me from the womb that I should be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him," speaking now of Christ, "though Israel be not gathered," and he's talking of Christ before the fulfillment of his great vision, "though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.

"And he said: It is a light thing"—let me give you a little more clear rendition. "And he said: It is not enough that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth. Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to servant of rulers; Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful."

We go over in the Macro Last Day Timeline Book: Section 3: Chapter 1: Joseph Smith to Return, how not only do these verses deal with Joseph Smith but also that Joseph Smith identified himself as this servant.

**(17–6) Isaiah 49:4–12. Did the Lord Forget [Joseph Smith], His Chosen [Prophet]?**

"The Restoration was a long time in coming. During the years of [restoration, Joseph Smith] undoubtedly felt lonely and forsaken by the Lord. Isaiah 49:4–12 shows that loneliness. Verse 4 describes the attitude of [Joseph Smith] somewhat discouraged, yet not completely so: "I have spent my strength ... in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the Lord" (Isaiah 49:4).

"Nephi spoke of the [Latter-day Saints] in their cast-off condition as being "a hiss and a byword and ... hated among all nations" (1 Nephi 19:14). Isaiah 49:7 describes that condition: men despise and abhor the Lord's covenant people. But [the church] still has hope: "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I [Joseph Smith] be glorious in the eyes of the Lord" (v. 5). [Joseph Smith] will yet be raised and restored and stand as "a light to the Gentiles" and as a beacon of "salvation unto the end of the earth" (v. 6). "In an acceptable time" God will hear [the righteous remnant in the church,] their cry and "give thee ["my servant," in 1 Nephi 21:8] for a covenant of the people" (Isaiah 49:8). That began with the call of Joseph Smith [but will not see its completeness until after Joseph Smith returns]."

(*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition), 2003, p. 192)

It's impossible to talk about the next subject, the redemption of Zion, without talking about the return of Joseph Smith, as he is the one who is responsible for this task.

I think this quote from Heber C Kimball does a very good job of summing up what we have already gone over, including Salt Lake City, etc. But it also bridges into this topic perfectly.

**Elder Heber C. Kimball**

"An army of Elders will be sent to the four quarters of the earth to search out the righteous and warn the wicked of what is coming. All kinds of religions will be started and miracles performed that will deceive the very elect if that were possible. Our sons and daughters must live pure lives so as to be prepared for what is coming. After a while the Gentiles will gather by the thousands to this place, and Salt Lake City will be classed among the wicked cities of the world. A spirit of speculation and extravagance will take possession of the Saints, and the results will be financial bondage. Persecution comes next and all true Latter-day Saints will be tested to the limit. Many will apostatize and others will be still not knowing what to do. Darkness will cover the earth and gross darkness the minds of the people. The judgments of God will be poured out on the wicked to the extent that our Elders from far and near will be called home, or in other words the gospel will be taken from the Gentiles and later on carried to the Jews. The western boundary of the State of Missouri will be swept so clean of its inhabitants that as President Young tells us, when you return to that place, there will not be left so much as a yellow dog to wag his tail. Before that day comes, however, the Saints will be put to a test that will try the integrity of the best of them. The pressure will become so great that the more righteous among them will cry unto the Lord day and night until deliverance comes...

"[For] the time is coming when we will be mixed up in these now peaceful valleys to that extent that it will be difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God. Then, brethren, look out for the great sieve, for there will be a great sifting time, and many will fall; for I say unto you there is a test, a Test, a TEST coming, and who will be able to stand? This church has before it many close places through which it must pass before the work of God is crowned with victory. To meet the difficulties that are coming it will be necessary for you to have knowledge of the truth of this work for yourselves. The difficulties will be of such character that the man or woman who does not possess this personal knowledge or witness will fall. If you have not got the testimony, live right and call upon the Lord and cease not 'till you obtain it. If you do not, you will not stand... Then the Prophet Joseph and others will make their appearance and those who have remained faithful will be selected to return to Jackson County, Missouri and take part in the building of that beautiful city, the New Jerusalem"

(May 1868, in *Deseret News,* 23 May 1931; see also Conference Report, Oct. 1930, p. 58–59; Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball,* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1945, p. 446, Smith, Robert W. and Elisabeth A., *Scriptural and Secular Prophecies Pertaining to The Last Days,* Ninth Edition, Pyramid Press, SLC, UT, 1947, pp. 134–138; *Deseret News,* May 23, 1931; W. Cleon Skousen, *Prophecy and Modern Times,* pp. 31–33, *An Army of Elders,* May 1868, Heber C. Kimball Reported by his son J. Golden Kimball, CR October 1930, p. 58. See also Prophetic Sayings of Heber C. Kimball to Sister Amanda H. Wilcox).

Verses 8–12 "Thus saith the Lord: In an acceptable time have I heard thee, O isles of the sea, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee my servant for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;

"That thou mayest say to the prisoners: Go forth; to them that sit in darkness: Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor the sun smite them; for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them." It is again talking of the people coming to Zion under these adverse circumstances.

"And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. And" when that takes place, "*then* O house of Israel, behold, these shall come from far; and lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim." From that point on, he turns his attention to Zion in some difficult and challenging things. This is one you really want to be awake and alive on.

Beginning with verse 13: "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; for the feet of those who are in the east shall be established." Now, if you read other passages in Isaiah, he refers to Zion in the last days as "those in the east." So in the midst of his prophetic picture concerning the gathering of Israel, he says, "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; for the feet of those who are in the east shall be established." In other words, we'll raise this ensign this standard, and Zion will be established with strength and with power on her mount, on the house of the Lord and on the covenants. And she will be an ensign and a standard to the world.

He goes on and says, "And break forth into singing, O mountains; for they shall be smitten no more; for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted." Now, that's a glorious thing about Zion. Then he backs up and talks about Zion in this period of adversity, and that's when I say hold onto your hats! Because this one is a difficult one.

Having spoken of her redemption, of Zion's feet being established in righteousness, he says, "But, behold, Zion hath said"—this is what we will say before that time—"Zion hath said: The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me," but the Lord adds, "but he will show that he hath not."

Have any of us reached this point in time yet? Have any of us in going to Church, in going to our meetings etc., etc. have felt that Zion has been forsaken, that Zion the New Jerusalem is no more? I know from talking with individuals that this is the case. We have most certainly reached the time period that President Heber C. Kimball prophesied of and Isaiah spoke of where there is a lamentation heard for Zion.

"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion." (Psalm 137:1)

It is important to remember that this time period of Zion's seeming neglect and outright abandonment "for might not this money better be spent?" is part of the process by which the people are made ready.

To use another phrase from Isaiah, Isaiah 4 concerning this time, when that happens and we've been so conditioned to think about "onward" and "upward"—"We're building! Look at the missionaries! Look how many temples we've got!" And that's all great. And Nephi looks to our time and President Benson has quoted it, and says, "They will say all is well in Zion, Zion prospers, all is well!" And that's our attitude.

When that whole ballgame changes and you are sitting in the desert and you are wondering about your year's supply and maybe it isn't even with you, maybe you haven't been able to haul it off with you fast enough, and you are sitting in the desert and you look at the whole picture and situation, and you say, "Hey, I thought we were the true Church! I thought this was onward and upward! What are we doing out here? The Lord has forsaken us, he has forgotten us, and he has forsaken us!"

He says, "But he will show that he hath not." Continuing on with verse 14 he says, "For can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee, O house of Israel. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." And then in the redemption out of that circumstance, as the redemption takes place, out of those difficult circumstances where we look around and say, "Hey, we've been forsaken, and I'm out here lying on the bare rocks and it's raining cats and dogs! I wonder what life is all about and where the gospel is and what this dispensation is doing!"

Then in that time of redemption, he says, "Thy children shall make haste against thy destroyers." Now, what does that say? Are there going to be destroyers? There are, and there is going to be a redemption from them. "Thy children shall make haste against thy destroyers; and they that made thee waste"—are there going to be those that make Zion waste? You bet! "They that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.

"Lift up thine eyes round about and behold; all these gather themselves together, and they shall come to thee." He is talking about the tremendous influx that will then come to Zion. When the standard is raised, when Zion becomes a sanctified people, when we are established on Mount Zion or upon her mount to become the true standard, the true ensign to the nation, the true example of righteous society, the true example of spiritual redemption and of political equality and economic opportunity, when we become that, then there will be a tremendous influx of people and of the gathering of people to Zion. And as the Lord says, "Lift up thine eyes round about and behold; all these gather themselves together, and they shall come to thee. And as I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on even as a bride. For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction—" so there will be "waste and desolate places" and a land where we get destroyed in some sense—"...the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants," that is, there will be so many who will come that there won't be room.

And he says, "And they that swallowed thee up," and there will be those that swallow Zion up. Zion has to be delivered from the mighty, and the Lord has covenanted to do that. He says, "and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away." Then note what he says, and this is so significant to our generation as Latter-day Saints: "The children whom thou shalt have," talking about those who come in and become the children of Zion, "The children whom thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the first...." Who is the "first"? It's that group of Latter-day Saints who get lost in the way, who don't hang onto the word, who don't know enough about the gospel and about the prophetic picture, so when they sit there and say, "The Lord has forsaken us," they simply leave and depart. And there will be multitudes who will leave and forsake the Lord and forsake his prophets and forsake his kingdom.

And this great sifting and forsaking is prophesied to take place when?

**D&C 45**

**30** And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

**31** And there shall be men standing in that generation, that shall not pass until they shall see an overflowing scourge; for a desolating sickness shall cover the land.

**32** But my disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die.

1. Times of the Gentiles is fulfilled
2. Desolating sickness
3. Saints standing in holy places and being not moved vs. men lifting up their voices against the prophet, cursing God and dying
4. Scourging

**D&C 84**

**57** And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written—

**58** That they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom; otherwise there remaineth a scourge and judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion.

"The children whom thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the first, shall again in thine ears say," and these people who come in after Zion is cleansed and the influx of people who come to her righteous standard, they will then say, "The place is too strait for me; give place to me that I may dwell. Then shalt thou say in thine heart," speaking of Zion as an entity, "Who hath begotten me these?" All these people coming in! All this great influx of people being converted to the Lord, "Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? And who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where have they been?"

Then the Lord answers that, and he says this: "Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their face towards the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me." (1 Ne 21:22–23)

Now let's turn to Jacob's commentary.

In 2 Nephi 6, he says,

"And now these are the words: Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the "Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people." In this whole scenario, the warfare against Zion and this whole prophetic vision of Isaiah, the primary thing that he is concerned with is the setting up of the standard. And that standard becomes Mount Zion, or Zion upon her Mount. And this standard is raised to the Gentiles among them. And when this standard is raised and established, then this great gathering of Israel foretold in scriptures will take place.

They are gathered not just physically, they are gathered to the standard. They are gathered to the gospel and to the endowment of glory. They are gathered to the house of the Lord, they are gathered to the program of Mount Zion to become the Lord's people, because we really are not Israel until Israel becomes Zion. And Zion really isn't Zion until she is established upon her Mount. So when the standard is raised, then, he says, quoting Isaiah 49, "And they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers."

Zion is going to wield tremendous power in that day. Let me just hold on to that and turn over to Section 64 of the Doctrine and Covenants. I just thought of it here, something that might be of interest concerning this whole picture of events and circumstances. Note how the Lord speaks of Zion in relation to the latter-days. Verse 41, he says, "Behold, I say unto you that Zion shall flourish, and the glory of the Lord shall be upon her; And she shall be an ensign unto the people, and there shall come unto her out of every nation under heaven. And the day shall come when the nations of the earth shall tremble because of her," and that's before the second coming, "the nations of the earth shall tremble because of her, and shall fear because of her terrible ones. The Lord hath spoken it."

O.K., now, there is going to be a time when Zion raises an ensign and a standard. In that time, the Lord himself will come to Zion. And he will dwell in Zion, and he will be there, and their children will be taught of the Lord, and this will extend over a period of years before he comes in his glory in the clouds of heaven. During that period of time he will instruct his people, because his business is to introduce a universal order of peace. You just can't come and institute a righteous order or to have it without having previously instructed people how to go about implementing that righteous order. He is going to come and reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and he can't reign as King of Kings until he finally raises up those Kings, those who are anointed as such in the house of the Lord, teaches and instructs them so that when he does come he can usher in an era of righteousness. So the Lord will make his appearance in Zion years before he comes in his glory in the clouds of heaven.

In that day, Zion will be terrible for her righteousness, her standard. Let me turn while we're on this, and I didn't mean to bring it in, but since we're on it, to Section 45, beginning with verse 66, where he is speaking of Zion in this period of time of the future. And he says this: "And it shall be called the New Jerusalem," and note how he characterizes it, "a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God." What does that imply? It implies not too much peace in the world about, right? A place of refuge is what? A place to which you flee, a place of safety. Then he says, "And the glory of the Lord shall be there." That's the cloud by day, the pillar of fire by night. That's why Zion has to be cleansed, that's why the refiner's fire, that's why faithful Latter-day Saints have got to be enlarged in their spiritual capacity through affliction, through faith and through getting close to the Book of Mormon.

The day will come when Ezra Taft Benson will be known as the beginning of the glorification of Zion, when he will be known as the prophet of the Lord who began to move us in the direction where we can literally and really and finally quit just hugging the Book of Mormon and saying it's true, and do it! and get the spiritual endowment that's associated with the gospel that really ought to be there.

I kept this last paragraph in here just to showcase how far we have truly fallen from understanding and our mission. **President Benson**, in his famous talk that Brother Hyrum Andrus keeps quoting, "Beware of Pride," says:

> "My dear brethren and sisters, we must prepare to redeem Zion.
>
> "It was essentially the sin of pride that kept us from establishing Zion in the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith. It was the same sin of pride that brought consecration to an end among the Nephites. (See 4 Ne. 1:24–25.)
>
> "Pride is the great stumbling block to Zion. I repeat: Pride is the great stumbling block to Zion.
>
> "We must cleanse the inner vessel by conquering pride."
>
> ("Beware of Pride," General Conference, April 1989)

The message was crystal clear—what went wrong? That's a question we each need to ask individually. Continuing on:

So he says it will be a land of peace, a city of refuge, and the glory of the Lord shall be there, "and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion. And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety.

"And there shall be gathered unto it out of every nation under heaven; and it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another." (see verse 69)

And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore we cannot stand." (see 70) Now, that's talking about power, a system, a power in the earth. And he says, "And it shall come to pass that the righteous shall be gathered out from among all nations." This is the warfare against Zion and the arm made bare and the people are beginning to gather, and they will not go in haste. But the Lord will go before them and will be their rearward, and they will bring as many as they can to Zion, and those who are left behind—the great alternative that Nephi gives in 1 Nephi 14:6–7, where the Lord will do a marvelous work where, if they choose not to obey unto life and righteousness, they will come down into captivity both spiritually and temporally and be destroyed. And that is the ushering in of the Millennium and the end of the world.

He says, "And shall come to Zion, singing with songs of everlasting joy." Now, that's what Isaiah is all about. That's what Isaiah is talking about.

[And when Zion is redeemed and built], we will save the Constitution—not in Washington, D.C., we'll save it here on the backbone of the American continent, and we'll offer it as a standard of political justice and righteousness. People will flee to it, and we'll raise the standard of Zion in glory, and we'll raise the standard of political justice and equity, and we'll extend those two standards throughout the world.

And behold, according to the words of the prophet," and this is Isaiah 11, "the Messiah will set himself again the second time," and that's not just the restoration of the gospel in Joseph Smith's day. There are 2 second times. The "again the second time" is when he finally comes around to do his work on Zion and perform the great and marvelous work, which the Book of Mormon defines not merely as the Book of Mormon—in fact, Moroni explained to the Prophet Joseph Smith that the Book of Mormon was preliminary to the great and marvelous work. It's not inappropriate to call the Book of Mormon a great and marvelous work, because it is. But the great and marvelous work of which the Book of Mormon speaks is the establishment of Zion, the gathering of Israel, the building of the New Jerusalem, the establishment of an order of righteousness, the ushering in of this great day of Israel and the era of righteousness of the millennial period. This is the great and marvelous work.

The Lord tried that with Joseph Smith in his day. He tried to get a gathering going. Read for example Section 84, the beginning verses. He starts out and instructs the Saints in the Prophet's day to gather to the New Jerusalem. He says this, verse 2: "Yea, the word of the Lord concerning his church, established in the last days for the restoration of his people, as he has spoken by the mouth of his prophets, and for the gathering of his saints to stand upon Mount Zion, which shall be the city of New Jerusalem." Now, they didn't build Mount Zion—they never did establish the economic order. They made an effort to do so, but they were unable to do so. The gathering was to Mount Zion, which City, the Lord states "shall be built, beginning at the temple lot [in Jackson County, Missouri], which is appointed by the finger of the Lord." The revelation then states, "Verily this is the word of the Lord, that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation."

The time-schedule of this last statement would go unfulfilled. Read, for example, D&C 124:49–53 where the Lord cancels the immediate requirement, but not the task of building the Temple in the Center Place of Zion, when it is to be done.

Please note, again, the Lord's statement: "For verily this generation shall not all pass away until an house shall be built unto the Lord (D&C 84:5), and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord, which shall fill the house." This is Mount Zion with her endowment of glory, which is the great Standard that must finally be raised. The Lord tried to do that in the early days of the Church; he tried to get the Saints to establish Mount Zion. And he gave the required revelations which are incident to and related to that work; this, primarily and centrally, is what the Doctrine and Covenants is about.

While the early Saints were good people, and while we honor and revere them, those of us who have been in the Church look back at our history in relation to them and what they did, and we honor and revere them for what they did. Yet they never fully paid the price! I could quote you from the Prophet Joseph Smith where he spoke to them and told them specifically, "If you don't meet the challenge and pay the price of knowledge and faithfulness, the Lord will pass over you and he will choose another people in another generation to fulfill his word." And they did not pay the price. So the Lord is going to set his hand again the second time.

I ask, are there Saints alive today that are willing to pay the price? We can't even agree as Saints that believing this stuff is essential, let alone having faith in it, let alone being willing to sacrifice for it! I'm reminded of a student manual quote in the Old Testament that we read for "Come, Follow Me" in 2022:

> **(34–4) Malachi 1:6–14. Of What Sins Was Ancient Judah Also Guilty and Why?**
>
> The priests and Levites of Malachi's day were mocking God by offering sacrifices to the Lord with sick, blind, and lame animals and calling them acceptable (v. 8). They had no reverence for what they were doing. The Lord told them: "I have no pleasure in you, … neither will I accept an offering at your hand" (v. 10). ***They were selfish and worldly, and not one of them would kindle a fire on the hearth of the altar unless he were paid for it.*** The Lord had been insulted. The table on which the offering was made was polluted. The offering itself was "contemptible" (v. 12). Such action, Malachi promised, would result in cursing rather than blessing.
>
> (*Old Testament Student Manual Kings–Malachi* (Third edition), 2003, p. 351)

Let me boldly say that believing in this doctrine is important to your salvation for it is impossible, without faith, for man to please God. And let me here also boldly say that those who practice priestcraft—those who won't put any sacrifice upon the altar without being paid for it—will also find only the hot displeasure of the Lord. And brothers and sisters, we've run out of time. President Nelson has committed us to become this people and to become them ***now.*** Because time is running out. No hot then cold then hot then cold measures will be sufficient. You are either in, or you are out. And if you think that you can be Zion or Bust when it is convenient and in the world when it is not, the Lord will spew you from his mouth, as he said he would, for being lukewarm.

So the Lord is going to set his hand again the second time. The first time was with Moses, and the second time [will be with] Joseph.

The Prophet therefore commented that his older brother, Alvin, that "he departed this life before the Lord had set his hand to gather Israel the second time." (D&C 137:6.) Thus, when the time comes, in the future, to build Mount Zion the Lord will "set his hand *again* the second time." Note what he says about this period—verse 14 of 2 Nephi 6: "Behold, according to the words of the prophet [Isaiah] the Messiah will set himself *again the second time* to recover them; wherefore, he will manifest himself unto them in power and great glory, unto the destruction of their enemies, when that day cometh when they shall believe in him." This did not happen in the early days of this Church to the extent to which he is speaking of it here.

The Lord did not destroy the Missourians and the people of Nauvoo who made war against the Saints and drove them from their lands. He did not do that. This statement, where he says he is going to set his hand to destroy the enemies that oppose, this is another ball game for another time. And then he goes on to say, "And they that believe not in him shall be destroyed, [speaking of this future time] both by fire and by tempest, and by earthquakes, and by bloodsheds, and by pestilence, and by famine. And they shall know that the Lord is God, the Holy One of Israel.

"For shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?" He's coming back and quoting the same question from Isaiah. And who is the prey? It's Zion. "So shall the prey be taken from the mighty or the lawful captive delivered." Then he answers, "But thus saith the Lord: Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; for the Mighty God shall deliver his covenant people. For thus saith the Lord: I will contend with them that contendeth with thee—And I will feed them that oppress thee, with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood…." This is a dissipated group that makes war, and when they get to making war with Zion, the Lord turns them one against another, and with blood lust, etc., they'll take out their vengeance on each other.

He goes on to say, "They shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine; and all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob." (see 2 Ne 21:26)

Now what is Jacob's commentary on Isaiah 49 all about? That's in there, a whole chapter's worth, chapter 6 of the book of 2 Nephi—what is it all about? It's about us. And it's about Israel in the last days, and it's about the Lord manifesting his power. Now, what are we going to do about it? How many of us are awake to the reality that we've got a job to do to build Zion and the building of Zion is going to be going out here, running out in the woods and do something to build Zion—it's to get your ministering done and to really support your Bishop and your Stake President and the brethren and to get your eye on the prophet and to read what he is saying and to get in tune with him and in step with him, and apply those things to our lives. Struggle! Go out and get yourselves a sacred grove and kneel down and pray and wrestle with yourself and get yourself right before the Lord, submissive to the Lord and to his Priesthood and authority. And if there is any contention between you and your neighbors, be man enough to go and say, "Look, I'd like to make things right; let's be brethren in the Lord." And then do the work of the Lord.

Get your year's supply in, because you are going to need it; it won't last very long, but get it. And then get the other things done. And the most important thing to get done is to get your lives spiritually properly founded. You can weather the other stuff if you have your lives spiritually founded and if you are of one heart and one mind and committed to the Lord and doing his work. Then you can rely upon him. That's what this great vision of Nephi and the commentary of Jacob is all about. That's it, and it's that relevant. It's as relevant as yesterday's and tomorrow's newspapers. It's right here, and we're just about ready to get into it.

Let's go on. Jacob makes this commentary on Isaiah 49, and that's not enough with him. He then turns around and puts in 2 more chapters of Isaiah. Right after 2 Nephi 6 is chapter 7, which is Isaiah 50. And then 2 Nephi 8, which is Isaiah 51. So he puts those 2 chapters right in as further statements on the idea and the theme which he is discussing.

Isaiah 50 (2 Nephi 7) is a prophecy of Christ and Israel.

Verse 1 to 3 deals with Christ and Israel.

Verse 4 to 9, "the tongue of the learned," etc., etc., and he talks about the obstinacy of Israel. For example, verse 7, "For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded. Therefore have I set my face like a flint...." He is dealing with a people Israel who really don't think too much of him. He is a man despised of others, yet he is the Son of God with the glory and power of the Father in him. And it requires him to do what he says in verse 7:

"For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded. Therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." Then he talks about those who are wayward and obstinate.

Again, let's read this and apply it to ourselves, beginning with verse 10. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Behold all ye that kindle fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks, walk in the light of your fire and in the sparks which ye have kindled." Now, what do we do? We walk according to our own opinions, we walk in the light of our own intellect. He says, "This shall ye have of mine hand," or those who do that, "Ye shall lie down in sorrow." Now, take that to heart, be pliable. When you learn something new, don't fly to pieces like glass, go ask the Lord if it is true. Don't say, "I've never heard that before, therefore it's not true." And don't say, "Hey, how does that relate to..."—something that's irrelevant. Open your hearts and your minds.

Verse 10 asks who fears the Lord that obeyeth the voice of his servants? Tying us directly back to the macro last day points of reference we already listed, that of standing in holy places and being not moved or those lifting up their voice against the Lord's servants, cursing God and dying. We don't want to be those who walk in the light of their own fire, with their own sparks. They shall lie down in sorrow, or in other words, they are cursing God and dying.

Having given us that little counsel in relation to Christ and Israel, then another very choice chapter is Isaiah 51. In there you are dealing with the righteous remnant that will finally be distilled and refined and brought forth out from among the Latter-day Saints. Do you note how I said that? The righteous remnant that will be distilled and refined and brought forth to be the church of the Lamb of God, of which Nephi writes that will be brought forth out from the Latter-day Saints.

Note once again Zion comes out from, it departs from, it is separated from—it does not rise in the midst of Babylon. As President Heber C Kimball taught, selected to take part, selected and taken out.

Let me just give you a few keys on this from Isaiah. Let's go back to the book of Isaiah, and let me just run through a few passages with you to show references in Isaiah concerning this righteous remnant. There are several remnants referred to in Isaiah. There is the remnant of Jacob upon this land, there's remnants out of all of Israel that will be brought, but there is also a focus on a remnant that will be brought forth to establish Zion. And this remnant will be brought forth out from among the Latter-day Saints, because we're in an era where we say, "All is well in Zion; Zion prospers and all is well," and we take many of our teachings from the precepts of men, and we gear our lives according to Gentile culture. We haven't forsaken Babylon, we've largely joined it, and we think if we can do better than they do on their team, then that makes us Zion. And that doesn't make us Zion, that just makes us run in with the herd.

So there is a righteous remnant to be called. Let me give you some of the verses on it. Isaiah Chapter 1, verse 9. The whole of chapter 1, by the way, deals with the Latter-day Saints. And it deals with that time when he is going to establish Zion. It's that time when Zion shall be redeemed with judgment and her converts with righteousness. But in verse 9 he says this: "Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah." This whole inundation of corruption is such that if the Lord doesn't step in and help and we don't apply ourselves, we would go the route of the American Gentiles, and we would be like Sodom and Gomorrah. There is a righteous remnant that won't do that.

Turn over to Isaiah chapter 4, verse 2. Chapter 4 is one that Nephi quotes, (2 Nephi 14:2) and it pertains to the Zion of the last days, and in verse 2, [verse 1 in I.V.] "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely to them that are escaped of Israel." We are going to have to do a little escaping. And the branch of the Lord in that day is going to be beautiful.

Over in Isaiah chapter 6, verse 13: "But yet in it there shall be a tenth, and they shall return." This "tenth" and the idea of returning, which ties in directly to Revelation 12.

**Revelation 12 (JST)**

**13** For when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

**14** Therefore to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might flee into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

**15** And the serpent casteth out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

**16** And the earth helpeth the woman, and the earth openeth her mouth, and swalloweth up the flood which the dragon casteth out of his mouth.

**17** Therefore the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have also the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Once again, this remnant "flees into the wilderness into her place."

In Isaiah chapter 10, verse 22: "For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return; the consumption decreed," and this is the latter-day, "the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness," so far as that remnant is concerned.

In chapter 28 of Isaiah, as he talks about the drunkards of Ephraim, and this isn't drunkards in the sense that they get it from a bottle, it's the kind of drunkenness when it says "they are drunk, but not with strong drink." They are drunk with the ideals and the zeal and the culture of the Gentile society, and they act on that principle and march by that drum beat.

Then speaking of the judgments to come upon Ephraim in that day, in verse 5, he says this: "In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty unto the residue of his people." Isaiah 51 is a whole chapter devoted to that righteous remnant. Note how he begins:

"Hearken unto me, ye that follow after righteousness." This, then, is that righteous remnant. "Look unto the rock from whence ye were hewn, and to the hole of the pit from whence ye are digged." Go back to your roots. See where you came from. Find out who you were. Find out what the Lord wants you to do. "Look to the rock from whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit from whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham," there's an example. "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you; for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him."

Now, this remnant is going to be left alone, they are going to sit in the dust. Many are going to say, "The Lord has forsaken us." What is your consolation? You go back to your roots and you look to Abraham, and you say, "I'm a descendant of Abraham, and the Lord is going to handle me like he did him," and what did the Lord do to Abraham?

This is what is known as having the faith as the Brother of Jared—this is as huge part of this righteous remnant's core attributes.

As a lone, single individual he took him out of Ur of the Chaldees, with other faithful people who believed. And he made covenants with him. And he had a wife, a beautiful wife, but she was barren, and she got to be 90 years of age and hadn't had any kids. The Lord said, "I'm going to establish my covenant through you, and she is going to have a baby." That was a real one! But the Lord did that! And it wasn't just through Abraham's genius in nature and ability, it was because of his faith, and the Lord delivered him as a lone individual.

When this righteous remnant he is speaking of here sits in the dust, where are they going to get hope? The Lord says, "Look to the rock from which ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit from whence ye are digged." Look to Abraham your father and Sarah, she that bare you, "for I called him alone and blessed him." For the Lord shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places." But there will be waste places, "and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation," and this will be the day when we've saved the Constitution and the righteous remnant begin to be something more than just four walls and preaching.

"Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation, for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people." And that "law" is the law of the gospel, the baptism of fire and the Holy Spirit, and the political law where the Latter-day Saints finally cooperate in establishing Constitutional freedom in this land.

"My righteousness is near!" He's telling this remnant, "Hey, look to Abraham, and here's what we're going to do." "My righteousness is near, my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath, for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner." While all that is predicated to come to pass in the earth, he says, "But my salvation shall be forever; and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

"Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart I have written my law." That's this righteous remnant, and he's talking directly to them. And when they are sitting in the dust, they'll read that passage and will say, "That's us! Here's what the Lord through Isaiah said about us! And he is writing personally to us!"

"I've written my law in your hearts; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation."

The Lord himself spoke of this righteous remnant and this same trial that they will be going through in 3 Nephi 24.

Verses 14 and 15 discuss them in this condition where there are many who are falling away because it seems as though there is no reward for keeping the Lord's statues and ordinances and walking mournfully before him. While those who are proud and those who work wickedness are seemingly set up, yea, they that tempt God are even delivered!

So you are going to have these two groups in the Church—those who are tempting God, polluting and leaving the church, cursing God and dying, etc.

But then, there is this righteous remnant that is discussed in verses 16 and 17:

**3 Nephi 24**

**16** Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

**17** And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

This is once again that righteous remnant who will be spared because it is separated. In verse 1 the Lord says, "Behold I will send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me," and in verse 18 the Lord says, "Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not."

So there is a servant of the Lord that is involved in this process who returns (implying that he left for a period of time) to select those who have been worthy to take part in the building of the New Jerusalem—exactly what Heber C. Kimball prophesied.

Going back to Isaiah, the Lord then talks to this servant.

Then he directs his attention to a person. That person is the presiding authority in that day among this righteous remnant. And that person is given the name of "O arm of the Lord." So he is talking personally to that individual, and he says this: "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord," talking to that person; "awake, as in the ancient days." "Awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?" He's talking about the miraculous power that he manifested back there and that he's going to have to have here in order to sustain this program.

Once again, the Lord talked about this same event in 3 Nephi 21. Verses 8 and 9 talk about this miraculous work that this servant is going to have to do in that day. And in verse 10, the Lord talks specifically about this servant .

**3 Nephi 21**

**8** And when that day shall come, it shall come to pass that kings shall shut their mouths; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

**9** For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and a marvelous work among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them.

**10** But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them. Yet I will heal him, for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.

"But I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared. The Lord of hosts is his name. And I have put my words in thy mouth," and he's talking to this one who is called "the arm of the Lord." "And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens," and this is the new heavens and new earth that is the millennial order, and it comes about through the ministry of this individual and through this righteous remnant establishing Zion.

Then here in verse 24, he gives us some statements, and actually this is from Isaiah 52, but Jacob puts it in Isaiah 51. And [once again], the Prophet Joseph Smith addresses himself to these two verses. Let's turn to Section 113. Section 113 is a revelation giving details of insight to Isaiah. The first part of the revelation concerns Isaiah, chapter 11, which is one of the chapters that Nephi includes in the Book of Mormon.

Beginning with verse 7, the question is asked by Elias Higbee, who was a judge and a close friend of the Prophet. "What is meant by the command in Isaiah 52:1," which is the same passage that's in 2 Nephi 8:24. The question is, "What is meant by the command in Isaiah 52:1, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion—and what people had Isaiah reference to?"

Note the Prophet's answer by revelation: "He had reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of priesthood to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel; and to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage."

Then the question is asked: "What are we to understand by Zion loosing herself from the bands of her neck?" The second verse of Isa. 52, and that also is quoted in the Book of Mormon; it's the last verse of chapter 8 in 2 Nephi. Here is the Prophet Joseph's answer by revelation: "We are to understand that the scattered remnants are exhorted to return to the Lord from whence they have fallen; which if they do, the promise of the Lord is that he will speak to them, or give them revelation. The bands of her neck are the curses of God upon her, or the remnants of Israel in their scattered condition among the Gentiles."

So here in the last of this chapter, chapter 50, devoted to the righteous remnant, then he ends up with this admonition: "Awake!" And note what the word "awake" means. It means we're asleep! In what way? You are all awake, I can see all of your eyes open. But bless your souls, we're asleep!

"Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion," and he is talking about the people. It's not some great big corporation over there, it's people who have been to the house of the Lord and who have established their lives on the sacred covenants there in the temple. And when you have enough people who really do it and who mean it and not just hold their hands up and covenant one way and then act another... (not just a group of people who say "oh I sustain the prophet, but then throw him under the bus and say that he is promoting the mark of the beast, etc. Not a group of people who say "I'll live the law of consecration" while in the temple but as soon as they get out of the temple they charge money for the words of Christ, setting themselves as preachers above the hearers, etc.)

The Lord finally implements that order and establishes that order, then you are going to have Mount Zion. And then the power of the Spirit will be made manifest. Then the Saints will awake.

So he says, "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall be no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." Then he adds another statement which the Prophet comments on: "Shake thyself from the dust." Now, what does that mean? Where is the dust? It's Gentile culture. You are not wallowing in the street physically, but you are in the dust. We are caught up with Gentile customs and patterns, and we get the [internet and social media, etc.] fed into our rooms and we get the crud that comes in, and it's all crap and dust—shake yourselves from it!

"Arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem; loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." What are the bands of his neck, what did Joseph say? The Gentile bands. "O captive daughter of Zion," and that's us.

When the redemption of Zion comes—let me turn to Section 103, beginning with verse 15—the Lord is addressing himself to the subject of the redemption of Zion. Note what he says. "Behold, I say unto you, the redemption of Zion must needs come by power." It'll be a situation where it will be necessary for the Lord to come out in power; otherwise, it can't be done.

"Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel." Now, here's the arm of the Lord.

And later in verses 21–22 the Lord clarifies who this servant, or arm of the Lord, is:

**D&C 103**

**21** Verily, verily I say unto you, that my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., is the man to whom I likened the servant to whom the Lord of the vineyard spake in the parable which I have given unto you.

**22** Therefore let my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., say unto the strength of my house, my young men and the middle aged—Gather yourselves together unto the land of Zion, upon the land which I have bought with money that has been consecrated unto me.

Going back to verse 17:

"For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ye must needs be *led out of bondage."* What does "bondage" mean? "Ye must be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm." There are different kinds of bondage, and we are in all of them!

We are going to be led out of bondage. There is spiritual bondage. There is economic bondage. And when the Assyrian comes in, there is going to be political bondage. And the situation will be such that the Lord will have to manifest himself by power, and it will be like Moses leading Israel out of ancient Egypt. Then he says that: "And as your fathers were led at the first," and the "first" has reference to getting out of Egypt, going through the Red Sea before Israel transgressed, the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night that went before them, that's what he is saying about the redemption of Zion.

"As your fathers were led at the first, even so shall the redemption of Zion be. Therefore, let not your hearts faint, for I say not unto you," and our hearts would faint if we didn't know some of this stuff. "Let not your hearts faint, for I say not unto you as I said unto your fathers: Mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence." Remember what

Jehovah said to your fathers? "Mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence." You read the 23rd chapter of Exodus. He finally got disgusted with ancient Israel. The Lord sent an angel, then, in his place and said, "Beware of him for my name is in him." That is, he has the right to speak and act and the revelations of my mind and will, will be in him, and it will be as though the Lord were speaking, but he is going to be an angel rather than him personally.

The Lord says this: "Therefore, let not your hearts faint, for I say not unto you as I said unto your fathers: Mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence." He won't say that to us, this righteous remnant, that is, and it's not all of the Latter-day Saints. He would say that to a lot of Latter-day Saints, but he won't say that to the righteous remnant. "But I say unto you: Mine angels," plural, "shall go up before you, and also my presence, and in time ye shall possess the goodly land." That's what the redemption of Zion is about. And that's what Isaiah is talking about.

Let's turn to 2 Nephi 12—in this chapter, we begin a whole package of chapters from Isaiah, beginning with chapter 2 and running on through successively through chapter 14. All those chapters are put in the Book of Mormon with a definite, clear indication that they all pertain to the last days—every last one of them, including chapter 6, which is the call of Isaiah. Some people want to know how that pertains to the latter-days.

Well, the Lord is going to call the "arm of the Lord." And the kind of call he gave to Isaiah is going to be repeated. So Isaiah 6 is in there to be fulfilled again, and it's just that simple.

So beginning with 2 Nephi 12, he starts out with Isaiah 2. Isaiah 2 talks about the mountain of the house of the Lord in the tops of the mountains. The inspired translation makes it clear that *when* the mountain of the Lord's house was established in a place called The Top of the Mountains—the word Ute means Top of the Mountains—the Lord would then begin to perform this work of judgment.

Yet Isaiah, Chapter 2, is not merely talking about the Salt Lake Temple, and it is not merely speaking about the coming of World War I. The Prophecy extends on down through subsequent events to the time when the New Jerusalem will be built, and to the time when it is said in verse 17, "...and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." The end result, in a peaceful order which will finally be established, is that "the law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

But this is only the beginning of the latter-day picture. We have discussed Nephi's prophecies of the last days, as matters of the greatest import of which we as Latter-day Saints ought to be aware. We should also understand that since Nephi was forbidden to write more about his visions than is contained in his personal account, he put many chapters of Isaiah's writing on the Small Plates as a means of doing two things: First, it gives us a basis to understand the Prophecies of Isaiah, for Nephi not only saw the same things that John the Revelator was later shown—and which he wrote about in the Book of Revelation—he also knew that Isaiah had seen and foretold many of these prophetic scenes. So Nephi is a key by which to understand the writings of Isaiah. Second, Nephi's use of the writings of Isaiah makes Isaiah another witness of these latter-day scenes. The end-result is that we now know the true meaning of Isaiah's writings as they apply to us in the latter day.

The Lord continued: "And I will give children unto them to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them." When this order of things is built up and established, and the Holy Order is established, the humble and the meek who will sustain the Constitution—they won't be great orators, they will be faithful people.

They won't be great grey-bearded orators, they will be the young and middle aged, bold and full of fire, who have faith as the Brother of Jared. The Lord speaks of these young and middle-aged men who will bring about this redemption of Zion in Doctrine and Covenants 101—in the Parable of the Nobleman and the Olive Trees—which deals with the redemption of Zion. And the Lord, once again, is talking to this same servant, and he starts in verse 55.

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**55** And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;

**56** And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard; for it is mine; I have bought it with money.

**57** Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen.

**58** And inasmuch as they gather together against you, avenge me of mine enemies, that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land.

We learn further of this contrast between these two groups—the old and the young—in:

**Doctrine and Covenants 128**

**18** ... It is sufficient to know, in this case, that the earth will be smitten with a curse unless there is a welding link of some kind or other between the fathers and the children, upon some subject or other—and behold what is that subject? It is the baptism for the dead. For we without them cannot be made perfect; neither can they without us be made perfect. Neither can they nor we be made perfect without those who have died in the gospel also; for it is necessary in the ushering in of the dispensation of the fulness of times, which dispensation is now beginning to usher in, that a whole and complete and perfect union, and welding together of dispensations, and keys, and powers, and glories should take place, and be revealed from the days of Adam even to the present time. And not only this, but those things which never have been revealed from the foundation of the world, but have been kept hid from the wise and prudent, shall be revealed unto babes and sucklings in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times.

**2 Nephi 27**

**23** For behold, I am God; and I am a God of miracles; and I will show unto the world that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever; and I work not among the children of men save it be according to their faith.

**24** And again it shall come to pass that the Lord shall say unto him that shall read the words that shall be delivered him:

**25** Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men—

**26** Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.

In these verses we read about, once again, that servant, who is Joseph Smith. In this case, we learn about the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon being a component of "the marvelous work and a wonder" being wrought in that day. But then we get that added information that the grey-bearded, wise, and seemingly learned are all teaching the precepts of men and shall perish. So the question, once again, is: who does the Lord work through in that day? We learn in verses 33–34:

**3 Nephi 21**

**33** Therefore, thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.

**34** But when he seeth his children, the work of my hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.

The Lord also has some rather unpleasant things to say about the daughters of Zion. He states in verse 16: "Moreover, the Lord saith: Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretchedforth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet"—he's very descriptive of the sisters.

He states: "Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts," and that has to do with their spiritual deficiencies and their moral deficiencies. "And in that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments, and cauls, and round tires like the moon," or all the things that they dress up with—Heaven knows what you call them!

He continues: "The chains and the bracelets, and the mufflers; The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the ear-rings; The rings, and nose jewels; The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping-pins; The glasses, and the fine linen," etc. He says, "And it shall come to pass instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle, a rent; and instead of well set hair, baldness; and instead of a stomacher, a girding of sackcloth."

Then he states of the male portion of Zion: "Thy men shall fall by the sword and thy mighty in the war. And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she shall be desolate, and shall sit upon the ground."

And we've learned about this war already, in which people are "lift[ing] up their voices, curs[ing] God and dy[ing]" or "stand[ing] in holy places, and [being not] moved" (D&C 45:32), and the weeping that will take place because almost an entire generation is lost. Or, as we've already discussed in Isaiah 49:20, "The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other…"

He goes on to say, "And in that day, seven women shall take hold of one man, saying: We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name…"

The Lord then speaks of the righteous remnant among the Saints, stating: "And in that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious; the fruit of the earth excellent and comely to them that are *escaped* of Israel. And it shall come to pass, they that are left in Zion and remain in Jerusalem shall be called holy, every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem—when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion"—note it's not just Zion, it's Mount Zion, Zion upon her mount—"and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory of Zion shall be a defense." The endowment of glory will be a defense for Zion in that day.

"And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and a covert from storm and from rain."

The angel Moroni quoted this chapter of Isaiah to Joseph Smith in September of 1823—Moroni quoted from Isaiah 2, about the house of the Lord. He quoted Isaiah 3, and the endowment of Zion with glory, explaining to Joseph Smith these great Isaiah passages.

Now, can you read the Book of Mormon with some of these keys? If you read the Book of Mormon and you pay the price, you can understand things which many others read and do not know what is being said—you will read and understand a view of the Book of Mormon message that you have never been able to get before. And it will open up a vista of knowledge and of understanding. It says some very disturbing things about the Latter-day Saints, many of us, but it will also give a vision of hope, that there is going to be a righteous remnant, and there is going to be a Zion of God, and the Lord's work in this world of corruption and perversion—which is fed into our living rooms by the media and into our literature, just literally, so that our young people hardly know what is true and what is false—is going to go forth unto victory.

Now, may the Lord bless us to see that vision. I bear you my testimony that that vision is true, and we're living in that day. And we're sitting with our feet on the very threshold, the very, very threshold of the beginning of those marvelous things. The Lord bless us to see and understand and act wisely, and above all to be united under our prophet and under the order of priesthood that centers in him, I pray humbly in Jesus' name, Amen.

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**Q&A**

**Question:** Is the great abominable church and economic kingdom of the devil which controls the nations of the earth?

**Answer:** The great and abominable kingdom is anyone who does not join the church of the Lamb and they will institute a collectivistic system and they will use modern technology. They will institute a program where they will put a mark on you and that mark will be run through a computerized program and that mark will be so vigorously upheld that you will not be able to buy or sell without verification. This does not pertain to Zion though, just to those guys over there in Babylon.

# Prophecies of John

**Taken and adapted from Lectures 20 & 21**
**JOHN'S REVELATION OF THE LAST DAYS**

"The book of revelation is one of the plainest books God ever caused to be written" [*TPJS,* p. 290].

Many of you may want to believe, but still may not [be able to, BUT with the help of] the Book of Mormon, the Prophet Joseph Smith, and [with help] from the [Lord I know by the end, you too will be able to say it is "one of the plainest books God ever caused to be written".]

On the basis of 1 Nephi 14, we have found the foundation to understand the book of Revelation, and I want you to get that in your minds, open your hearts and your souls, because that verily is true.

In 1 Nephi 14, Nephi sees these two great churches, the church of the mother of abominations, which is the whore of all the earth, and then he sees the church of the Lamb of God, and that church of the Lamb constitutes those Latter-day Saints who come up in adversity, purify their lives and realize the blessings that Nephi talks about when he said, "I beheld that the Saints were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory." That's the church of the Lamb, the spiritually endowed church.

So he sees that these two churches exist, and this brings it down to our time, because there's never a period in this dispensation when you have a situation where the church of the Lord, the true church of Jesus Christ, is planted in all the major nations of the Gentiles—you don't have that. And you haven't had that until post-World War II days, when with the administration of President McKay we began to be an international organization. This prophecy focuses, then, on our time and on future events from our time.

I'd like to take a moment here to make sure we understand this because it is so important to understand. All of these prophecies in which the Church of the Lamb is scattered across the face of the Earth could not have taken place while the Church was being gathered into a single location. Which puts the fulfilment of those prophecies post the Church going global. This helps us make sure that we are putting the macro last day timeline together correctly but on another even more fundamental level this also lets us know or teaches us that the Lord, even though the option to redeem Zion and build New Jerusalem was always on the table, the Lord knew that we would fail and that we wouldn't do it.

**Orson Pratt**

"Then [Nephi] saw in the latter days the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles who should discover this land, and send forth their emigrants and form a great nation of Gentiles upon this continent; and he saw that they should have power to free themselves from every nation under heaven. Then he saw that by the power of God the records of his people should come forth; and he saw that a Church of the Saints should arise, and that it should spread itself upon all the face of the earth, among all the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles; and he saw also that the great and abominable church that was among all the nations of the Gentiles, having dominion among all peoples and tongues, should gather together in multitudes among the nations of the earth and fight against the Lamb of God and against the Saints of the Most High and his covenant people, and he says—'I beheld the power of the Lamb, that it descended upon the Saints of the Most High that were scattered among all the nations of the Gentiles, and they were armed with righteousness and the power of God in great glory. And then he said, I saw the mother of abominations begin to have wars and rumors of war among all the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles; and the Lord spake unto him, saying, Behold, the work of God is upon the mother of harlots, &c.'

"This vision continued down to the end of time. But what I wish to call your attention to at this time is one event which has been in a measure literally fulfilled. It is an event that no man, unless he were a Prophet inspired by the Most High God, could have had a heart big enough to prophesy of with the least expectation of its fulfillment; and that is, the Church of the Lamb of God that was to be raised up after the coming forth of these records of the ancient Israelites should be among all nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles.

"To prophesy that a church would arise and have place in all the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles, and then to prophesy that the 'mother of harlots' would gather together vast multitudes among all these nations and fight against the Saints, is taking a step far beyond what an impostor would undertake, if he were disposed to successfully impose upon mankind. How far has this been fulfilled? Only in part; so far, however, as to give us no possibility of doubting that the balance will be fulfilled, every jot and tittle. It is true, the Saints of the Lamb of God are not among all the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles yet; but there are very many of the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles where this little Church that was organized in 1830 actually has a dominion and place."

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 7, p. 176)

[Nephi] sees the power of God in great glory rest upon them, and they were all armed with righteousness and with the power of God. Then he sees the preparatory work that the Lord does to establish Zion. And that preparatory work is a cleansing work, and that cleansing work is a work of cleansing among the Latter-day Saints and of this land of Zion. So he sees when the power of God rests upon the Saints, that there will be wars and rumors of wars among all nations, and this includes our beloved America.

Now, there are two things that are necessary, primarily, to prepare.

One is that we need a Zion people; we need people who are truly Zion in the sense that they become sanctified, that they are truly a consecrated people, that they live in tune with the Holy Spirit, and that the Holy Spirit brings them to a free and open union where they see eye to eye, as the Prophet says they will do when he brings again Zion. That kind of preparation will take judgment. As Isaiah says in chapter 1 of Isaiah, "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness." That's the key, then.

The other part of the preparation is the cleansing of this land. That preparation can take place in either one or two ways. It can take place by the repentance of the Gentiles and their embracing of the gospel and freely building up the New Jerusalem. But if this doesn't happen, then when the Gentiles turn into iniquity and the cup of iniquity is full, then the Lord indicates as he said in his great promise that this is the land of Zion and that it will be a free people as long as we serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ. If we don't, then when we are ripened in iniquity, we will be swept off the land.

And when are we ripe in iniquity? When will this choice will be past for the Gentiles? When will the cup of iniquity be full?

**The Family: A Proclamation to the World**

***"Further, we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets."***

**Brigham Young**

"There is one principle I would like to have the Latter-day Saints perfectly understand—that is, of blessings and cursings. For instance, we read that war, pestilence, plagues, famine, etc., will be visited upon the inhabitants of the earth; but if distress through the judgments of God comes upon this people, it will be because the majority have turned away from the Lord. Let the majority of the people turn away from the Holy Commandments which the Lord has delivered to us, and cease to hold the balance of power in the Church, and we may expect the judgments of God to come upon us; but while six-tenths or three-fourths of this people will keep the commandments of God, the curse and judgments of the Almighty will never come upon them, though we will have trials of various kinds, and the elements to contend with—natural and spiritual elements. While this people will strive to serve God according to the best of their abilities, they will fare better, have more to eat and to wear, have better houses to live in, better associations, and enjoy themselves better than the wicked ever do or ever will do."

(*Journal of Discourses,* Volume 10, p. 335, June 26, 1864)

**Hugh Nibley**

"There comes a time when the general defilement of a society becomes so great that the rising generation is put under undue pressure and cannot be said to have a fair choice between the way of light and the way of darkness. When such a point is reached the cup of iniquity is full, and the established order that has passed the point of no return and neither can nor will change its ways must be removed physically and forcibly if necessary from the earth, whether by war, plague, famine, or upheavals of nature (Mormon 2:13–15)."

(*Collected Works of Hugh Nibley,* Volume 6, Part 5, Ch. 11, p. 140)

**Elder Ezra Taft Benson**

"We must love our young people, whether they are in righteousness or in error. In this way we can give them a chance to discern and to learn. But we must also give them a fair choice. Today many are not succeeding.

"Yes, 'There comes a time when the general defilement of a society becomes so great that the rising generation is put under undue pressure and cannot be said to have a fair choice between the Way of Light and the Way of Darkness.'"

("Satan's Thrust—Youth," General Conference, October 1971)

> [Being swept off the land] has happened twice at least—actually three times. The antediluvian people were swept off in the flood and the Garden of Eden was here, the Jaredites were swept off, and the Nephites were swept off. And it's going to happen again.
>
> Now, that preparation, then, is to prepare for the gathering and the fulfilling of the Lord's covenants. The gathering is the gathering of Israel to America. And the fulfilling of his covenants is bringing his people to Christ and to the Zion order and to the sacred endowments of the Spirit, to the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, so that Zion truly becomes Mount Zion. That's what the gathering, that's what the redemption of Israel is all about. It's not [just] getting your bodies physically from one place to another.
>
> In order to prepare for that great gathering, you've got to have a cleansing of this land, because this is the land of Zion. And then you've got to have a refinement of the people of the Lord, because they are they who are fore-appointed, the doctrine of election, to build Zion. And Zion is going to be built with judgment, and her converts with righteousness. Not just to cleanse out the inactive, but to refine and purify the faithful, so that their souls through faith, through diligence, through challenge, through opposition, through adversity will expand. Their reliance on the Lord will be perfected, and when they come out the other end of the tunnel, they will be a righteous remnant, ready to establish the New Jerusalem. And then to the New Jerusalem, endowed with glory and power, the great gathering of Israel will take place.
>
> When Nephi sees that great scenario, then he is also shown that there is a special apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ who was foreordained to write about these events. These events in the cleansing of Zion, these events in the cleansing not just of America but the cleansing of the whole earth. So the book of revelation is a book explaining the cleansing of Zion and the cleansing of the whole earth and the establishment of God's kingdom on this earth for the millennial reign. How much more important can a book be than one that deals with those subjects?

It's interesting that Brother Hyrum Andrus asks here, almost 40 years ago, "what could be more important than this?" while here we are today with seemingly the majority of the Church not knowing about it, or teaching outrightly against it.

> So Nephi sees this apostle of the Lamb, and the angel says concerning him, verse 21, "Behold, he shall see and write the remainder of these things." Then he clarifies that a little later in the statement indicating that Nephi saw the same thing that John the revelator saw and that Nephi, while he was not permitted to write it, nevertheless saw the full vision which John would see, and that was a point of future for him and his time. Nephi writes in a measure the introduction, the preface. If you want to study the book of Revelation, where do you start? You start with 1 Nephi 14. Why? Because that introduces the thing and gives the orientation. We are dealing, then, with an inspired commentary and an inspired introduction to a heretofore very difficult to understand book that has been interpreted in about every different way that is humanly possible by people from the beginning of the Christian era to the present time. And the key to the correct knowledge of that book is in this sacred volume, the Book of Mormon.

Nephi's commentary and introduction is like "The Hobbit" to the "Lord of the Rings"—people are focused entirely on The Book of Revelation and forget that the events in The Hobbit need to transpire before the events of The Lord of the Rings can transpire—i.e. what Nephi saw in vision has to happen *before* what takes place in the Book of Revelation… So, not only does it provide the basis to understand the thing, it provides the universe, the way things are for the next events to transpire… And remember:

**President Russell M. Nelson**

"We live in the day that "our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation." We have front-row seats to *witness live* what the prophet Nephi saw *only in vision,* that "the power of the Lamb of God" would descend "upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory."

*"You,* my brothers and sisters, are among those men, women, and children whom Nephi saw. Think of that!

"Regardless of where you live or what your circumstances are, the Lord Jesus Christ is *your* Savior, and God's prophet Joseph Smith is *your* prophet. He was foreordained before the foundation of the earth to be the prophet of this last dispensation, when "nothing shall be withheld" from the Saints. Revelation continues to flow from the Lord during this ongoing process of restoration."

("Hear Him," General Conference, April 2020)

**President Russell M. Nelson**

"As you study your scriptures during the next six months, I encourage you to make a list of all that the Lord has promised He will do for covenant Israel. I think you will be astounded! Ponder these prom-

ises. Talk about them with your family and friends. Then live and watch for these promises to be fulfilled in your own life."

("Let God Prevail," General Confereence, October 2020)

President Nelson is aware that these events are taking place right now and in our future—"the greatest manifestations of the Lord's power will take ***between now*** and when the Lord returns"...

**Ether 4**

**15** Behold, when ye shall rend that veil of unbelief which doth cause you to remain in your awful state of wickedness, and hardness of heart, and blindness of mind, then shall the great and marvelous things which have been hid up from the foundation of the world from you—yea, when ye shall call upon the Father in my name, with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, then shall ye know that the Father hath remembered the covenant which he made unto your fathers, O house of Israel.

**16** And then shall my revelations which I have caused to be written by my servant John be unfolded in the eyes of all the people. Remember, when ye see these things, ye shall know that the time is at hand that they shall be made manifest in very deed.

Now, with that as introduction, let me turn to the book of Revelation and let's see if we can meet the challenge of analysis and get focused in on this particular volume and see what it means.

Brother Andrus skips the early chapters of Revelation, I'd recommend if you are interested in those (as those actually are the bridge between what Nephi saw and the events after, i.e. the bridge between The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings) to check out my Understanding Revelation 1–3.

Chapter 4 [is] where you get right into the beginning of the prophetic picture. The first thing John sees as expressed in chapter 4, or one of the first, is the great goal and objective for the creation of this earth.

With that in mind, let's turn to Section 77, and maybe you can put your thumb in Section 77 for awhile, because we'll want to come back to it for a few clarifications. Section 77 is an interesting revelation. It's a series of questions and answers, and they all pertain to the book of Revelation. In this particular question and answer series, the Prophet deals with this subject of the sea of glass and indicates what it is. Verse 1: "What is the sea of glass spoken of by John, 4th chapter, and 6th verse of the Revelation? It is the earth, in its sanctified, immortal and eternal state.

This earth will be Christ's, and those who are celestial will dwell on it, and they will have that means of acquiring knowledge and understanding. Then they will each have their own pocket-size Urim and Thummims the Prophet points out in Section 130, whereby things pertaining to a higher order of celestial orbs can be made manifest to each of those. And on that Urim and Thummim that they have will be a New Name that no man knows, etc.

So according to the Prophet Joseph Smith's clarification, starting with the book of revelation is a great cosmic picture dealing with this earth. And that great cosmic picture commences opening up with the goal and the objective that this earth is to be sanctified and is to become a millennium. And then after the millennium as John sees in chapter 20, you will have the final great battle of Gog and Magog, ***there being two such battles. One is before the millennium and one is after.***

That is an important point of clarification that I hope people will take notice of—there are "two such battles," one before the millennium and one after. The one before is battle, blood, and tears, and the destruction of the wicked on the earth. The one after the millennium ties into the resurrection of telestial bodies and the sons of perdition, and the ultimate final judgement of them.

So the book of Revelation, then, is a great revelatory work concerning this earth and its ultimate destiny.

Another thing that we need to understand is these 4 beasts and some details here in chapter 4 of the book of Revelation. Here in the forepart of this chapter, and I'm just going to abbreviate, John sees the throne of God, and then in verse 4, he says, "And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold."

He goes on to say that he also saw four beasts. In the latter part of verse 6, "And in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion," and he goes on and describes them.

Now, let's turn to Section 77 again and pick up the Prophet's clarification on this subject. The question is asked, verse 2, "What are we to understand by the 4 beasts spoken of in the same verse? They are figurative expressions, used by the revelator, John, in describing heaven, the paradise of God, the happiness of man, and of beasts, and of creeping things, and of the fowls of the air; that which is spiritual being in the likeness of that which is temporal; and that which is temporal in the likeness of that which is spiritual; the spirit of man in the likeness of his person, as also the spirit of the beast, and every other creature which God has created."

The question then is asked, "Are the four beats limited to individual beasts, or do they represent classes or orders? They are limited to four individual beasts, which were shown to John, to represent the glory of the classes of beings in their destined order or sphere of creation, in the enjoyment of their eternal felicity.

The Prophet Joseph Smith once took up this subject of the book of Revelation in comparison with the book of Daniel. Daniel talks about "figures of beasts," and there are the 4 great figures of beasts. ***The Prophet made it very clear that there's a great difference between Daniel's use of beasts and John's use of beasts.***

Another great point of clarification that many "saints" would do well to pay attention to.

Daniel uses the term "figure of a beast," which is actually a representative thing and it applies to beastly kingdoms here on the earth, which are degenerate and which, then, are vicious in their basic spirit. In that sense, then, those 4 beasts represent the Babylonian kingdom, the MedeoPersian, Greco-Macedonian, Roman, etc. Those are the 4 beasts.

When it comes to the book of Revelation, John sees actual animals in the paradise of God. He sees actual animals there. These animals are made figurative in the sense that there are things portrayed about them which depict some of the nature that they have. The Revelation says that the four beasts "were full of eyes before and behind." Now, the eyes are symbolic of light, intelligence, and that kind of thing. The wings are symbolic of the power to move and to act. So while they are individual animals, they are figuratively portrayed to symbolize their nature. But we're talking about different creatures.

For example, here's the Prophet Joseph Smith's statement. He says, "I suppose John saw beings there of a thousand forms that had been saved from ten thousand times ten thousand earths." Now, John sees the whole vision of the creations of Christ. He sees the animal kingdom. And that's just simple. And in that animal kingdom on the worlds which Christ has created and redeems, John apparently saw beasts from ten thousand times ten thousand earths. He says, "...strange beasts of which we have no conception. All might be seen in Heaven. The grand secret," and keep this as the central point, "The grand secret was to show John what there was in Heaven." I've always said that if there's not a cow there, I don't want to go there! I love milk that much! And I've got a good old mutt friend or two that I've had in life that were

just as near and dear to my heart as a member of the family. I hope I have that continued relationship in the resurrection.

That's what Joseph is saying: "The grand secret was to show John what there was in Heaven. John learned that God glorified himself by saving ALL that his hands had made, whether beasts, fowl, fishes or men, he will glorify himself in them."

Now, realizing this, that there is a resurrection of animals, realizing that God is going to save everything that he creates and glorify it, he's going to do that and that's his committed program, then John sees 4 great animals, and the Prophet talks about those 4 great animals, and they represent "the order of the animal kingdom in the enjoyment of their eternal felicity."

The Prophet says this as he speaks of them: "God who made the beasts could understand every language spoken by them. The four beasts were four of the most noble animals that had filled the measure of their creation and had been saved from other worlds," other worlds than this one.

**Moses 7**

**64** And there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, ***which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made;*** and for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest.

It will be truly amazing to witness animals, food, plants, etc. from all the Lord's creations, not simply this earth…

**1 Corinthians 2**

**9** But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

Truly, the scriptures being read here are more literal than most realize… How amazing!

[Joseph Smith continues], "Because they were perfect; they were like angels in their sphere. We are not told where they came from," that is, which world, "and I do not know. But they were seen and heard by John, praising and glorifying God.

John, then, begins by seeing the throne of God.

Can we begin to see what the meaning is of John's Revelation? As he sees these, he sees, verse 9: "And when those beasts give glory and honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth forever and ever." See, these aren't beastly systems like Daniel sees, that are beastly and make war against the Kingdom of God. These are actual animals in the paradise of God that represent the creative processes as they pertain to the animal kingdom, and the twenty and four elders represent the faithful saints who will be redeemed and the blessings given to them.

As John sees these things then, in chapter 5 he sees a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. Verse 2: "And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

This gives us a real point of reference for when these events in the vision are taking place… He continues

And one of the elders saith unto me," one of these four and twenty elders, "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah," and that's just another name for the Messiah or for Christ, "the Root of David," that's just another name of Christ in relation to his lineage in the flesh, "hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof."

The book is sealed with seven seals and Christ prevails and is worthy to open it.

Let's turn again back to Section 77 and get the Prophet's clarification on the subject before we move on. As he speaks on this subject, he says this, verse 6: "What are we to understand by the book which John saw, which was sealed on the back with seven seals? We are to understand that it contains the revealed will, mysteries, and the works of God; the hidden things of his economy concerning this earth during the seven thousand years of its continuance, or its temporal existence." Now, the temporal existence began with the fall. The word "temporal" comes from the word "temporary," and the temporal existence of the earth begins with the fall of Adam and Eve. Verse 7: "What are we to understand by the seven seals with which it was sealed? We are to understand that the first seal contains the things of the first thousand years, and the second also for the second thousand years, and so on until the seventh."

The book, then, is sealed on the back with seven seals. Its content is a revelatory record of all that has gone on, on this earth, from the fall of Adam down through time. The contents under each seal, or within the book sealed by a given seal, deal with that particular 1,000 year period of time. Is that clear?

Let's just say a word or two of clarification that is very important at this point in relation to that book and its seals. Sometimes people get the idea that those seals are opened at the beginning of each thousand years. That's not true. They are all sealed, and they are all opened, not in the thousand years where the events transpire, but they are opened in the latter-days.

There is another feature to this that we need to see. This other feature relates to the opening of these seals. In Revelation 6, we see the opening of those seals, or the opening, at least, of the first 6 of those seals. With the opening of the first 6 of those seals, we see things portrayed in this chapter. When the first seal is opened, he sees a white horse, and "he that sat on him had a bow (Rev. 6:2); and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer."

When the second seal was opened, he writes, and keep in mind now that these animals, and they are from other worlds, are involved in this great process. So the second beast is heard to say, "Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword." Now, this beast is a tremendous military system, and power is given to take peace from the earth.

When the third seal was opened, he says, "I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse: and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand." "And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine."

He says, "And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth."

Then he sees the fifth seal reading in verse 9, "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them," which symbolizes blessings, endowments, elevation in their status. White robes were given to them, "and it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." In other words, let's let all the martyrs get taken care of and then the Lord will come out in his judgment. In the meantime, he pacified them, if you want to use that term—it's a little more than that.

They were given white robes, symbolizing the glory and the power and the things that came to them.

Then he says, when he opened the sixth seal, and I'm going to turn here to the Inspired Revision of the Prophet Joseph Smith who dealt with this, in order to get you the more complete and accurate picture from the standpoint of latter-day revelation. In relation to the sixth seal, I.V. Rev. 6:12: "And lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heavens opened as a scroll is opened when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains. And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; For the great day of wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?

All right, the sixth day is the ordination—and I use that word meaningfully—not the fulfillment, the *ordination* of the second coming.

Now let's go back and see if we can pick up the picture on this. Some people maintain that these various figures associated with the opening of the seals represent actions and activities in the respective thousand year period, so that the white horse and he that sat upon the white horse with the bow represents something that took place between the fall of Adam and 1,000 years of the year of the world. And the red horse represents something that took place between 1,000 of the year of the world and the year 2,000, which would include the flood which took place somewhere around the year 1635 or so after Adam's fall. And so on down.

This, however, disregards the clarification given by the Prophet Joseph Smith—so let me give you that clarification. Let me turn to the Prophet Joseph Smith's statement, and let's see what he says about it. He's the person who called it the plainest book God ever caused to be written; he's the person who, like John the Revelator, saw what John saw. And, like the brother of Jared, saw what the brother of Jared saw. Hence, he just may be qualified to make a clarification that is meaningful.

Here in the *Teachings,* page 290, he says this: "John saw beasts that had to do with things on the earth, ***but not in past ages.*** The beasts which John saw had to devour the inhabitants of the earth ***in days to come."*** Future from John. And then he quotes the book of Revelation: "And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw and beheld a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering, and to conquer."

Now, is this in the first millennial period of this earth's temporal state?

Or is it after John the Revelator's time, according to Joseph Smith? He makes it very clear, does he not?

Then he goes on. "And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword." Then he says, "The book of Revelation is one of the plainest books God ever caused to be written." And that's where the statement comes in.

So these things that happened when the seals were opened, when the first seal was opened and the white horse went forth, it has nothing directly to do with 1,000 years from Adam's fall to the first millennial period. It is that which is depicted when that seal is opened. ***The opening of the seals are made to reveal the sequence of events in the last days.*** I don't know whether you've picked that one up, but that's one of the best statements I've made all day long—***The opening of the seals are made to reveal the sequence of events in the last days.***

These seals are to be opened in the last days, and at the opening of each seal, there are certain prophetic events to take place.

For those still confused on this point, I would recommend the Understanding Revelation Introduction.

Are the contents of the seals revealed immediately upon their opening? The answer is no. How do we know that? We turn to Section 88 of the D&C. Here the Lord talks about the immediate events ushering in the millennial reign.

Then here in Section 88, verse 108, he says, "And then shall the first angel again sound his trump." This is another group of angels; it relates to the events of the second coming, to what takes place. They sound, they get the events of the second coming in gear, and the second coming takes place, and then immediately after the second coming, they blow their horns again. And note what it says:

"And then shall the first angel again sound his trump in the ears of all living, and reveal the secret acts of men, and the mighty works of God in the first thousand years." Now, here's when the contents of the sealed book are revealed. It is after Christ comes in his glory and as a preparatory thing for that great task that the Saints will perform when they judge the nations of the earth. And in order to exercise a righteous judgment at the beginning of the millennium. Zion will have been established, the millennial order, and the first item of business is to bring about a judgment of all men from Adam on down. And in order for that judgment to be made in righteousness, then that sealed book, the seals of which have been previously opened in the last days, that sealed book has its contents revealed as this order of angels sound their trumps.

Why so? So that the Saints who have the challenge of judging the world will have a basis, an intelligent basis to fulfill that challenge and that responsibility.

He goes on and says, verse 109: "And then shall the second angel sound his trump, and reveal the secret acts of men, and the thoughts and intents of their hearts, and the mighty works of God in the second thousand years—And so on, until the seventh angel shall sound his trump...."

...The contents under each of these seals is a revelatory record of the human family, including the secret thoughts of their hearts, for the various successive thousand year periods from the fall of Adam down to the opening of the seventh seal. That's what it contains. Now, as those seals are opened, then John sees prophetic events. The white horse represents something that's going to take place on earth when the first seal is opened. The red horse represents something that's going to take place on earth in the way of judgments, in the way of the cleansing of Zion, in the way of the cleansing of the earth, when the second seal is opened. And so on down through. Actually, there are four horses. These are the four horsemen of the apocalypse. They represent four major eras of judgment leading up to the final cleansing of the earth.

Let us turn to the Prophet Joseph Smith for some more clarification. Section 87 of the D&C, which is called the "Prophecy on War." So let's just say a few words about this, and then we'll come back to the book of Revelation and see if we can pick up the theme with the Prophet Joseph's clarification as a basis.

Section 87 of the D&C was given Christmas day, December 25, 1832. Many people as they read this say that this is a prophecy of the Civil War. Let me back up and say that's not quite so. This is too narrow a view. This is not merely a prophecy of the Civil War. Note, for example, the opening verse. "Verily, thus saith the Lord concerning the wars," and that's plural, not "a" war, "concerning the wars that will shortly come to pass, beginning at the rebellion of South Carolina, which will eventually terminate in the death and misery of many souls; And the time will come that war will be poured out upon all nations, beginning at this place."

Now, what's the prophecy on war about? Let me give you the Prophet Joseph Smith's own words on it; this is Section 130 of the D&C, where a few years later he comes back to this same subject and draws information and makes clarification on the prophecy on war. In verse 12, he says, "I prophesy, in the name of the Lord God, that the commencement of the difficulties which will cause much bloodshed previous to the coming of the Son of Man will be in South Carolina." Now, do you get the scope of things? It's not a prophecy about the Civil War, it's a prophecy about this era of judgment that we call "the last days" that will exist, transpire, take place ***previous to the coming of the Son of Man.***

He says, "This a voice declared to me, while I was praying earnestly on the subject, December 25, 1832." What's the date of the prophecy on war? December 25, 1832. He clarifies that the prophecy on war is a statement of an overview of the judgments that ***will come,*** that will finally lead up, as the prophecy says, to that time when the "consumption decreed hath made a full end of all nations" (87:6). Now, that's what it's talking about.

Within that scope of prophetic vision, let's take the prophecy on war for just a minute and we'll carefully or quickly, at least, dissect it a little bit.

The prophecy begins with a statement about the American Civil War, and it makes it clear that the American Civil War is the beginning of an era of warfare.

"For behold, the Southern States shall be divided against the Northern States, and the Southern States will call on other nations, even the nation of Great Britain, as it is called...." This the Southern States did, and Great Britain became involved in our internal affairs, and it cost them 15 million 500 thousand dollars in the Geneva arbitration of 1870, when the thing was finally cleared up. If I were doing this revelation, I'd put a new paragraph right there, because there is the beginning of a new idea.

It begins this new idea and says, "And they," and the antecedent to "they" is Great Britain, "And they shall also call upon other nations, in order to defend themselves against other nations; and then," not till then, not in the Civil War, but "then" when Great Britain calls on other nations to form a coalition against other nations, and this was the Allied and associated powers, with Great Britain in 1909 calling upon other nations against the central powers of Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, etc., "then war shall be poured out upon all nations."

In 1909, Great Britain called upon other nations to defend herself against these other nations, and by then this secret network had divided the nations of Europe into two opposing camps. When they were thus divided into two opposing camps, all it took was a little incident for one nation to go to war against the other. And as a result, then one nation after another was dragged into that.

For America, Wilson ran on the ticket of keeping us out of the war.

But B. H. Roberts, an L.D.S. scholar in the summer of 1914, wrote a little article on the prophecy on war, which was published, in which he quotes this statement—"When Great Britain calls on other nations to defend herself against other nations, then war will be poured out upon all nations." Brother Roberts then said, "Hey, they have called upon other nations, and this incident that is underway there is not going to be the end of it. One nation will be dragged into this after another, until it has become global in its impact." So war was poured out upon all nations. That's the second thing.

You first of all had the American scene. Then you have the scene shift to Great Britain.

Then the prophecy on war goes on down, and this is all related to the 6th chapter of the book of Revelation. Let me just put it this way: Revelation 6, 1 Nephi 14 and the D&C Section 87 all deal with the same subject and the same prophetic picture. That's an important point. They all deal—Nephi sees it and writes it in his manner, saying, "I've seen it," talking about wars being poured out, etc. The book of Revelation sees it, and now here the prophecy on war. Let's get the picture, then, from here and then we'll go back.

In verse 4, following in sequence, "And it shall come to pass, after many days"—many days after what? Well, you can take two possibilities. Many days after the rebellion in South Carolina. Or you can take the other alternative or choice, many days after war has been poured out upon all nations, [i.e. WWII] . If you'll study this out carefully, you'll find that the general tenor of thought is that this is in sequence. So we're talking about many days after [WWII].

"Many days," after that, "slaves shall rise up against their masters, who shall be marshaled and disciplined for war." Many days. That gets us clear on down through a ways, and slaves rise against their masters. I've seen articles written on the prophecy on war that try to bring the American slaves who joined the Civil War into the picture, and have them fulfill this. You can't do that; that's wrenching the scriptures. That's taking them out of context. You've got to say, "O.K., we first have American Civil War and then we have Great Britain calling upon other nations, an era of world war, and then many days after that you have slaves rising against their masters. Their masters are marshaled and disciplined for war. They are a militaristic program, and slaves revolt against them.

Then note in verse 5, "And it shall come to pass also...." The word "also" extends the statement in verse 4, saying that the kind of thing you are talking about in verse 4 is going to take place in another setting, with another group. "And it shall come to pass also that the remnants who are left of the land will marshal themselves, and shall become exceedingly angry, and shall vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation."

Now, we know from the Book of Mormon what verse 5 is all about. We know what it is when the remnants who are left in this land go through among the Gentiles like a lion and the beasts of the forest, and like a young lion in the midst of a flock of sheep. And they are exceedingly angry, and they vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation.

The parable of the Nobleman and His Olive Trees in Doctrine and Covenants 101 not only clarifies who that group is and what they are doing, but also why they are "angry." 3 Nephi 21 also deals with this same time period.

**Doctrine and Covenants 101**

**43** And now, I will show unto you a parable, that you may know my will concerning the redemption of Zion. ...

**47** And while they were yet laying the foundation thereof, they began to say among themselves: And what need hath my lord of this tower?

**48** And consulted for a long time, saying among themselves: What need hath my lord of this tower, seeing this is a time of peace?

**49** Might not this money be given to the exchangers? For there is no need of these things.

**50** And while they were at variance one with another they became very slothful, and they hearkened not unto the commandments of their lord.

**51** And the enemy came by night, and broke down the hedge; and the servants of the nobleman arose and were affrighted, and fled; and the enemy destroyed their works, and broke down the olive trees.

**52** Now, behold, the nobleman, the lord of the vineyard, called upon his servants, and said unto them, Why! what is the cause of this great evil?

**53** Ought ye not to have done even as I commanded you...?

**54** And behold, the watchman upon the tower would have seen the enemy while he was yet afar off; and then ye could have made ready and kept the enemy from breaking down the hedge thereof, and saved my vineyard from the hands of the destroyer.

**55** And the lord of the vineyard said unto one of his servants: Go and gather together the residue of my servants, and take all the strength

of mine house, which are my warriors, my young men, and they that are of middle age also among all my servants, who are the strength of mine house, save those only whom I have appointed to tarry;

**56** And go ye straightway unto the land of my vineyard, and redeem my vineyard; for it is mine; I have bought it with money.

**57** Therefore, get ye straightway unto my land; break down the walls of mine enemies; throw down their tower, and scatter their watchmen.

**58** And inasmuch as they gather together against you, avenge me of mine enemies, that by and by I may come with the residue of mine house and possess the land.

**59** And the servant said unto his lord: When shall these things be?

**60** And he said unto his servant: When I will; go ye straightway, and do all things whatsoever I have commanded you;

**61** And this shall be my seal and blessing upon you—a faithful and wise steward in the midst of mine house, a ruler in my kingdom.

**62** And his servant went straightway, and did all things whatsoever his lord commanded him; and after many days all things were fulfilled.

**3 Nephi 21**

**7** And when these things come to pass that thy seed shall begin to know these things—it shall be a sign unto them, that they may know that the work of the Father hath already commenced unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he hath made unto the people who are of the house of Israel.

**8** And when that day shall come, it shall come to pass that kings shall shut their mouths; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

**9** For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and a marvelous work among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them.

**10** But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them. Yet I will heal him, for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.

**11** Therefore it shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words, who am Jesus Christ, which the Father shall cause him to bring forth unto the Gentiles, and shall give unto him power that he shall bring them forth unto the Gentiles, (it shall be done even as Moses said) they shall be cut off from among my people who are of the covenant.

**12** And my people who are a remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, yea, in the midst of them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he go through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

[We are once again dealing primarily with the Redemption of Zion with the servant Joseph Smith Jr., but that Redemption follows] the Assyrian [or destroyer, in] this land. We, then, with the power we can muster and with the power of the Lord—keep in mind as we discussed here the other evening, Isaiah says that the Assyrian will be driven back by the "power of the anointing." So it will be a combined situation.

The Lord says, "I will send the Assyrian against a hypocritical nation, and he will cleanse," etc. This land, [this church and it's people] having been cleansed [and prepared], will [Redeem Zion].

The Church has been humbled and it has been cleansed. Zion has been refined, and the remnant that Isaiah talks about over and over again, that the Book of Mormon talks about—we discussed here earlier in the Isaiah prophecies—then that remnant that has been cleansed and sanctified, this will be the group of people who will redeem Jackson County. And they'll build up that order and they'll save the Constitution—not in Washington, D.C., perpetuating the Gentile order. The times of the Gentiles are fulfilled! They were fulfilled in 1967. Jesus gives us a clue in Luke 21. He says there that Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

When did Jerusalem cease to be trodden down by the Gentiles? It began in 1948 with the war there, and then there was this 6-day war in 1967 and the times of the Gentiles were officially fulfilled.

For those curious more specifically just about the Times of the Gentiles and the difference between them "being fulfilled" (past tense) and "ending" (future tense) check out that chapter in The Macro Last Day Timeline.

So he sees in the book of Revelation, he sees the American Civil War, he sees the coming of world war, he sees slaves rise against their masters, and he sees the latter-day remnant. Then he doesn't say anything more specifically, he just says this: "And thus with the sword and by bloodshed the inhabitants of the earth shall mourn; (D&C 87:6) and with famine, and plague, and earthquake, and the thunder of heaven, and the fierce and vivid lightning also, shall the inhabitants of the earth be made to feel the wrath, and indignation, and chastening hand of an Almighty God, until the consumption decreed hath made a full end of all nations." He doesn't give any specific details more than that.

But those are enough. John's Revelation 6 does the same thing. In John's chapter 6 overview of the last days, he mentions four things—the white horse, the red horse, the black horse, the pale horse. And these four events are correlated with the prophecy on war.

**Doctrine and Covenants 87**

**4** And it shall come to pass, after many days, slaves shall rise up against their masters, who shall be marshaled and disciplined for war.

**5** And it shall come to pass also that the remnants who are left of the land will marshal themselves **(#1)**, and shall become exceedingly angry, and shall vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation.

**6** And thus, with the sword and by bloodshed the inhabitants of the earth shall mourn **(#2)**; and with famine **(#3)**, and plague **(#4)**, and earthquake **(#6)**, and the thunder of heaven, and the fierce and vivid lightning also, shall the inhabitants of the earth be made to feel the wrath, and indignation, and chastening hand of an Almighty God, until the consumption decreed hath made a full end of all nations;

**7** That the cry of the saints, and of the blood of the saints, ***shall cease to come up*** into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, from the earth, to be avenged of their enemies. **(#5)**

1. The Redemption of Zion
2. War poured out upon all nations
3. Famine
4. Plague
5. Blood of the Saints crying
6. Earthquake

**Revelation 6**

**1** And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, one of the four beasts, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, saying, Come and see.

**2** And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. **(#1)**

**3** And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

**4** And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that

they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword. **(#2)**

**5** And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

**6** And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and hurt not thou the oil and the wine. **(#3)**

**7** And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

**8** And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. **(#4)**

**9** And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

**10** And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

**11** And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. **(#5)**

**12** And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake **(#6)**

1. White horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.
2. Red horse: war, peace was taken from the earth
3. Black horse: famine
4. Pale horse: plague
5. Blood of the Saints crying
6. Earthquake

You'll notice that these are exactly the same, like word-for-word the same, save for the first point—"a man on a white horse with a crown and a bow." Would we be stretching things to say that this man on a white horse with a crown riding forth and to conquer is none other than the Lord himself via the Redemption of Zion?

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**15** Behold, I say unto you, the redemption of Zion must needs come by power;

**16** Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel.

**17** For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ye must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm.

**18** And as your fathers were led at the first, even so shall the redemption of Zion be.

**19** Therefore, let not your hearts faint, for I say not unto you as I said unto your fathers: Mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence.

**20** But I say unto you: Mine angels shall go up before you, ***and also my presence,*** and in time ye shall possess the goodly land.

**21** Verily, verily I say unto you, that my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., is the man to whom I likened the servant to whom the Lord of the vineyard spake in the parable which I have given unto you.

**22** Therefore let my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., say unto the strength of my house, my young men and the middle aged—Gather yourselves together unto the land of Zion…

**Joseph Smith Jr.**

I am like a huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain; and the only polishing I get is when some corner gets rubbed off by coming in contact with something else, striking with accelerated force against religious bigotry, priestcraft, lawyer-craft, doctor-craft, lying editors, suborned judges and jurors, and the authority of perjured executives, backed by mobs, blasphemers, licentious and corrupt men and women—all hell knocking off a corner here and a corner there. Thus I will become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver[1] of the Almighty, who will give me dominion over all and every one of them, when their refuge of lies shall fail, and their hiding place shall be destroyed, while these smooth-polished stones with which I come in contact become marred.

("The Prophet's Characterization of Himself," *TPJS,* p. 304)

The footnote on "quiver" goes to 1 Nephi 21:2.

**1 Nephi 21**

**1** And again: Hearken, O ye house of Israel, all ye that are broken off and are driven out because of the wickedness of the pastors of my people; yea, all ye that are broken off, that are scattered abroad, who are of my people, O house of Israel. Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken ye people from far; the Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.

**2** And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;

**3** And said unto me: Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.

**4** Then I said, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught and in vain; surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.

**5** And now, saith the Lord—that formed me from the womb that I should be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him—though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.

So we have Christ on a horse, with a bow, and Joseph Smith is the polished shaft (arrow) in the Lord's quiver who will be used to gather them, i.e., "say unto the strength of mine house…" But what about the crown? Well, obviously, the Lord is King of kings and will eventually be crowned such, but there is, I believe, even more beautiful symbolism there.

**3 Nephi 24**

**16** Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

**17** And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

**18** Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

We have Joseph Smith returning and discerning here, but we also have the Lord mentioning these elect, these "remnants of Jacob" as being "his Jewels"… His jewels in what?

**Zechariah 9**

**16** And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land.

The footnotes on "stones" takes you back to 3 Nephi 24, "jewels"…

When the sixth seal is opened, it is the ordination of the second coming [to the world in glory, Christ does not come to the world in actual fact at that time] We've got a bunch of literature out, but they've never really done their homework in relation to the prophetic events. Let me turn to Section 77 again, and let's go back and pick up the picture from the Prophet Joseph Smith. He's talking here about the events to take place as depicted in Revelation 8 and 9.

Revelation Chapter 7 is a special spotlight scene, that deals with the calling of the 144,000 great High Priests of the Holy Order, whose mission it will be to gather people in to the Church of the Firstborn, the sanctified Church, the Church prepared for the second coming of the Christ. It's this Church that's going to be caught up to meet Christ [when Christ does appear in actual fact to the entire world in glory]. The 144,000 will have that ministry. And then they do their work in a period of 21 years, plus. After the opening of the 7th seal, there is silence in Heaven, not on earth, in Heaven, for the space of 1/2 hour, or "about" one-half hour it says. One-half hour would put it, in the Lord's time, 21 years. "About" indicates that it can be a little more than that. And it's during that period of time, when the heavens look on with awe, in silence, that the 144,000 go forth in the earth. There are plagues, there are judgments, and their ministry is to bring people into the Church of the Firstborn.

Let's read what the Prophet Joseph has to say about that. He says, "When are the things to be accomplished which are written in the 9th chapter of the Revelation?" His answer is, "They are to be accomplished after the opening of the 7th seal, before the coming of Christ." Now, is Christ going to come at the opening of the 7th seal in his great world appearance? No. Why? Because these last great plagues and judgments that cleanse the wicked from the earth—and this is merely the parable of the wheat and the tares, the 144,000 gather the wheat. They gather them into the Church of the Firstborn; that's the bin. And they organize them according to the Holy Order as the Lord revealed to Joseph Smith in Section 86.

Then when they are gathered in, the Lord comes to his temple and the great Adam-ondi-Ahman council is held in connection with that great gathering and its accomplishment. Then the great plagues are poured out and the wicked are cleansed from the earth. And this is spoken of in Revelation 8 and 9.

The Prophet says, "They are to be accomplished AFTER the opening of the seventh seal, BEFORE the coming of Christ."

And remember, President Nelson said these events lie between now and when Christ comes again—they haven't happened yet!

So Christ doesn't [make his world appearance] until after the opening of the 7th seal [in heaven]. [During that] halfhour of silence, there's plagues, and it's under the 6th plague that the wicked are gathered to Jerusalem for the great Abomination of Desolation. The last stage of that period of things is 3 1/2 years. There's a longer period that leads into it, but the last stage of it will be a 3 1/2 year period of time. Then you'll have, after that, Christ stands on the Mount of Olives and then the wicked are cleansed. But Christ doesn't [make those later appearances] until some time way after…

When people put [the Great and Dreadful Day before the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem] they don't know the prophetic picture. When they put Christ coming to his temple [as being the Palmyra New York temple dedication] they don't know what they're doing. We've got some literature out, and somehow someone got one to me somewhere that's all geared up with those great events and those 3 1/2 years somewhere, ***and it's just a bunch of garbage.*** Leave it alone. Well, read it. If you can't separate the wheat and the chaff, ***go ahead and eat the chaff!***

In Revelation 7:1 John discusses the choosing of the 144,000. Let's read what it says "And after these things," and the antecedent to these is the event depicted in chapter 6 which gives you an overview of the judgments in the last days under the figures of the white, the red, the black, and the pale horse and the other openings of the seals. They goes on to say ***"and after these*** things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth…holding the four winds of the earth, that the winds should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel"—they saw first of all, four angels. Then he says, "And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God; and I heard him cry with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea." Now, these are four destroying angels, or at least their ministry at this time is one of destruction. So he says, "And I heard him cry with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

Let me turn to the *Teachings* of the Prophet Joseph Smith, page 321, where he deals with chapter 7 of the book of Revelation, and he says just briefly, this. This is the report or the digest of his discourse. "Four destroying angels holding power over the four quarters of the earth," and that's a better translation, "until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads, which signifies sealing the blessing upon their heads, meaning the everlasting covenant." And in this he goes on to indicate bringing them into the Church of the Firstborn.

Can you see the significance of that clarification? You see four angels, they have power to destroy. Then you see a fifth angel, and this fifth angel ascends from the east and as the four angels are about to do their thing, he says, "Hey, fellas, now you hang on. Don't get over-zealous. We've got a job to do before we reap down the earth even though it's as corrupt as it is. And the thing we've got to do is to seal the servants of God in their foreheads," which means sealing the blessings of the gospel and the house of the Lord upon them, and thereby organizing the Church of the Firstborn.

Who is this angel flying in the midst of heaven?

Let us now break down a key quote from **Joseph Smith** (*TPJS,* pp. 364–65), identifying himself in this role:

> "The Savior said when these tribulations should take place [Matthew 24, D&C 103:12–13, Rev. 7:14–15, etc], it should be committed to a man who should be a witness over the whole world: the keys of knowledge, power and revelations should be revealed to a witness who should hold the testimony to the world. It has always been ***my province*** [responsibility]… Just at the time when some men think that I have no right to the keys of the Priesthood—just at that time ***I have the greatest right."***

When the debate begins on what is and is not Joseph Smith's calling, province, responsibility, etc., he reminds us that in that moment he is the man with the greatest right. Continuing the quote:

> "All the testimony is that the Lord in the last days would commit the keys of the Priesthood to a witness over all people. Has the Gospel of the kingdom commenced in the last days? And will God take it from the man until He takes it him Himself?"

When will Joseph Smith be crowned among the prophets of old? When will the keys be taken from Joseph Smith, as Joseph explained, by Jesus Christ himself? The same event, Adam-ondi-Ahman. Continuing the quote:

> "I have read it precisely as the words flowed from the lips of Jesus Christ. John the Revelator saw an angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth."

Joseph Smith has now identified himself as John's "angel flying through the midst of heaven." Continuing with the quote:

> "The scripture is ready to be fulfilled…"

Joseph Smith has identified himself as this angel and then says this prophecy is ready to be fulfilled, meaning a future event. When Joseph Smith spoke those words in 1844, the Book of Mormon was already published, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was already restored, and missionary work had already commenced. Firstly, Joseph Smith did not believe that this angel was Moroni or any of the angels that appeared at Kirtland Temple, singularly because they appeared in the past and this event was to happen, according to Joseph Smith, in the future. So when would this happen according to Joseph Smith? Joseph explains as he continues:

> "...when great wars, famines, pestilence, great distress, judgments, etc. are ready to be poured out on the inhabitants of the earth."

Joseph here identifies the time period that this is to happen as being directly before the great wars, famines, pestilence, etc. Continuing the quote once again:

> "John saw the angel having the holy Priesthood, who should preach the everlasting Gospel to all nations. God had an angel—a special messenger—ordained and prepared for that purpose in the last days."

Once again, Joseph Smith is identifying himself as this angel. Finishing the quote, the prophet says:

> "Woe, woe be to that man or set of men who lift up their hands against God and His witness in these last days: for they shall deceive almost the very chosen ones!"
>
> (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* pp. 364–365)

Now, let's go to Section 77 again and pick up the picture here as the Prophet Joseph Smith gives it to us. He says, and here's as very important clarification, verse 8: "What are we to understand by the four angels, spoken of in the 7th chapter and 1st verse of Revelation?" And note his answer, "We are to understand that they are four angels sent forth from God, to whom is given power over the four parts of the earth to save life and to destroy." Their powers are to seal to eternal life and to seal to the damnation of hell, and to raise to life and to administer judgment unto death, over the four parts of the earth to save life and to destroy.

"These are they," and note this, "who have the everlasting gospel to commit to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people; having power to shut up the heavens, to seal up unto life or to cast down to the regions of darkness."

Note what is said in the next verse in Section 77: "What are we to understand by the angel ascending from the east in Rev. 7:2? We are to understand that the angel ascending from the east is he to whom is given the seal of the living God over the twelve tribes of Israel; wherefore, he crieth unto the four angels having the everlasting gospel, saying: Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." And then the Prophet adds, "And, if you will receive it, this is Elias which was to come to gather together the tribes of Israel and restore all things."

Who are the 144,000? Let me read further in Section 77. "What time are the things spoken of in this chapter to be accomplished?" This sealing of them, let's get to that first. "They are to be accomplished in the sixth thousand years, ***or the opening of the sixth seal,"*** during that period of time. Some time between now and the opening of the 7th seal, there is going to be the calling of the 144,000. They will be prepared, they will be great High Priests—note what the Lord says about it.

"What are we to understand by sealing the one hundred and fortyfour thousand, out of all the tribes of Israel—twelve thousand out of every tribe? We are to understand that those who are sealed are High Priests, ordained unto the Holy Order of God." These aren't High Priests, say for example like I'm a High Priest. I'm a High Priest in the ecclesiastical order. I have the temporary job of being a member of the High Council of the Alpine Stake of Zion. That High Priest office is in the ecclesiastical order.

These High Priests are the kind of High Priests that Abraham wanted to become. Read chapter 1 of Abraham where he sought for his appointment, and he became a High Priest holding the rights belonging to the fathers. And this order of priesthood came down from the beginning. "It was conferred upon me by the fathers." It came down and pertains to God's appointment to the fathers concerning their seed.

A High Priest of the Holy Order is one, first of all, who has received fulness of priesthood in the house of the Lord where it is given, and where only it is given. It is given as a joint ordinance. The sisters are involved and will be involved in that great ministry. So it's a joint ordinance and it is conferred in the house of the Lord. One who is a High Priest, then, is one who has received that fulness of priesthood and then presides in that order. He has the right to do it. He has the right to administer fulness of priesthood. And he has the right to preside in the Holy Order of God on that plane and level of the Zion society.

With that clarification, "What are we to understand by the sealing of the 144,000, out of all the tribes of Israel," and keep in mind there are 12,000 out of every tribe. "We are to understand that those who are sealed are High Priests, ordained unto the Holy Order of God, to administer the everlasting gospel; for they are they who are ordained out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, by the angels to whom is given power over the nations."

So he says these High Priests are ordained by the angels "to whom is given power over the nations of the earth, to bring as many as will come to the church of the Firstborn." This is not a missionary crew! They will preach the gospel, they will do that, yes. But their primary objective is to take those who have received the gospel and have been sanctified and bring them into the church of the Firstborn by and through the sealing powers of the holy priesthood and the fulness of the priesthood given in the house of the Lord. And that's the way you build the church of the Firstborn. And it's that church that's going to be caught up to meet Christ in his coming in glory.

So with that, let's go back to Revelation 7.

In this particular revelation, let's read what he says starting with verse 1. He saw four angels standing on the four corners or parts or quarters, rather, of the earth, holding the four winds "that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east having the seal of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads," and this is the sealing powers of the priesthood.

"And I heard the number of them who were sealed: and there were an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel." (verse 7) Now, a clarification or two. You've got to gather enough of the tribes to have a basis to do that. ***The return of the ten tribes will come before the selection of the 144,000, that's simple. The return of the ten tribes will come before the opening of the 7th seal, that's simple.*** There will also be those from Judah who will be thus sealed.

I suspect in these mighty events while the Jewish nation as a nation is not redeemed until the [events at the Mt of Olives], that there will be those of the sons of Judah who will participate in many of these things. There will be those of the sons of Judah who do.

Before the opening of the 7th seal, you will have the calling out and the giving of the sacred rites and the appointments of High Priests within the Holy Order and over the Holy Order, to a body of men of 144,000, from every tribe of Israel. We are from Ephraim, and Ephraim will be called out ***and elected first,*** I presume, because he is the birthright tribe. And you will get some from Joseph, from the [tribe of Manasseh]. And when the ten tribes come—***and they will return in a body.*** The

Prophet Joseph said that so clear, there should be no issue on the matter. He gave us that knowledge with such certainty that there should be absolutely no issue on that matter.

They will return as a body, and they'll have prophets in their midst. And like we said this afternoon, they will come to Zion and be crowned with glory. And from among that body, that body of Israel, many of the 144,000 will be called, because they will be on that plane and that level of things.

Let me just make this clarification: The Prophet Joseph Smith makes it clear that the 144,000 ***began to be called out*** as early as Kirtland. There were some of the faithful brethren in Kirtland who were given that promise, that they ***would be part of that number.*** The 144,000 will include not just mortal people, but translated people and ***even some resurrected people.*** [And Joseph Smith], will preside over that great work. And this is the harvest! This is the gathering of the wheat, this is the parable of the wheat and the tares. And you gather the wheat into the church of the Firstborn.

When that is done and it's done through this sacred ministry, then you have the time for the cleansing of the earth. That's what the book of Revelation is about. It's about the great harvest season of this earth and about the ushering in of the millennial period and the cleansing of Zion and the cleansing of the earth. And eventually the celestialization of the earth as an abode for the righteous. And it's just that simple!

He talks, then, about the 144,000, and then he goes on and says, verse 9: "After this, I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues"—it's one thing to be the work crew, the 144,000 who do this, and these are High Priests, ***and there will be others*** and it's another thing to receive the benefits and blessings and to receive fulness of priesthood and prepared and made members of the church of the Firstborn. This will be a great multitude as he says here, "clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands."

Meaning the 144k are a *part* of The Church of the Firstborn. The Church of the Firstborn is a much, much larger group consisting of all the exalted.

So much for chapter 7.

In chapter 8, it begins by saying, "And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." That's the Lord's time. One day of the Lord is a thousand years for us. You compute that out and a half hour is about 21 years of time. And when he says, "about a half hour," he's not talking exactly half an hour, but about. I suspect it may be a few months over that, say 21 years and 10 months or something like that. There is silence there, and it's during that period of silence in heaven that this great task force goes forth [in the midst of these plagues and judgements]. These are those who fulfill the prophecy of Jeremiah in chapter 16—"I will send for fishers, and then I will send for hunters, and they'll hunt them out of every hole and every crevice in the rock," the great 144,000. They are really the ones who teach the gospel and administer its power and who seal up those who are rejected to the damnation of hell.

**D&C 77:9. What Is the Significance of the Angel from the East Sealing the Servants of God?**

"The four angels who are given power over the earth are kept from sending forth desolations upon the earth until God's servants are sealed in their foreheads. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that this sealing "signifies sealing the blessing upon their heads, meaning the everlasting covenant, thereby making their calling and election sure" (*Teachings,* p. 321).

"Elder Orson Pratt gave this additional explanation:

"'When the Temple is built [in the New Jerusalem] the sons of the two Priesthoods [Melchizedek and Aaronic] … will enter into that Temple … and all of them who are pure in heart will behold the face of the Lord and that too before he comes in his glory in the clouds of heaven, for he will suddenly come to his Temple, and he will purify the sons of Moses and of Aaron, until they shall be prepared to offer in that Temple an offering that shall be acceptable in the sight of the Lord. In doing this, he will purify not only the minds of the Priesthood in that Temple, but he will purify their bodies until they shall be quickened, and renewed and strengthened, and they will be partially changed, not to immortality, but changed in part that they can be filled with the power of God, and they can stand in the presence of Jesus, and behold his face in the midst of that Temple.

"'This will prepare them for further ministrations among the nations of the earth, it will prepare them to go forth in the days of tribulation and vengeance upon the nations of the wicked, when God will smite them with pestilence, plague and earthquake, such as former generations never knew. Then the servants of God will need to be armed with the power of God, they will need to have that sealing blessing pronounced upon their foreheads that they can stand forth in the midst of these desolations and plagues and not be overcome by them. When John the Revelator describes this scene he says he saw four angels sent forth, ready to hold the four winds that should blow from the four quarters of heaven. Another angel ascended from the east and cried to the four angels, and said, 'Smite not the earth now, but wait a little while.' 'How long?' 'Until the servants of our God are sealed in their foreheads.' What for? To prepare them to stand forth in the midst of these desolations and plagues, and not be overcome. When they are prepared, when they have received a renewal of their bodies in the Lord's temple, and have been filled with the Holy Ghost and purified as gold and silver in a furnace of fire, then they will be prepared to stand before the nations of the earth and preach glad tidings of salvation in the midst of judgments that are to come like a whirlwind upon the wicked.' (In *Journal of Discourses,* 15:365–66.)"

(*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual,* 2018)

Read Section 1 of the Doctrine and Covenants where power is given to those who bear the message of the gospel to seal up to the damnation of hell those who reject this message.

The missionaries may go forth with some measure of that power, but its fulness is exercised by the 144,000. And when they get through, note what John says: "And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets." Now here you are preparing for the great cleansing of the earth.

"And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense…came up. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth; and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

"The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth; and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up." So you go through those great plagues of the last times.

Let me just clarify, those plagues are spoken of in two places in the book of Revelation, chapters 8 and 9. And then John comes around and gives a different slant to them in chapters 15 and 16.

He says, "And I saw another mighty angel stand upon the earth—to lift up his hand to heaven." This mighty angel is Michael the Archangel. "And swear by him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that are thereon," etc., "that there should be time no more.

"And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up, and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey." Let me turn again to Section 77. The question is asked, verse 14:

"What are we to understand by the little book which was eaten by John, as mentioned in the 10th chapter of Revelation? We are to understand that it was a mission, and an ordinance, for him to gather the tribes of Israel; behold, this is Elias who, as it is written, must come and restore all things." Now, [an] Elias is one who presides over the Holy Order.

We've left out a point here that is vital and important and we need to come back, so let me do that at this time. In verse 12, let's get another clarification. "What are we to understand by the sounding of the trumpets, mentioned in the 8th chapter of Revelation?" These seven trumpets of cleansing, etc. "We are to understand," and note how he puts this, "that as God made the world in six days, and on the seventh day he finished his work, and sanctified it," the world, "and also formed man out of the dust of the earth." Now, what is he saying?

The first six days of creation he organized the physical orb. What did he do on the seventh day? He finished it and he sanctified it, he brought it into full paradisiacal glory. And what else did he do? In addition to that he says he also formed man out of the dust of the earth. Man is ordained under the sixth day, fulfilled under the seventh. He uses that as an illustration. Note how he words it: "We are to understand that as God made the world"—we're going to use this to illustrate something else. "As God made the world in six days, and on the seventh day he finished his work, and sanctified it, and also formed man out of the dust of the earth, even so, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years will the Lord God sanctify the earth." There is a likeness between creation and cleansing. He will sanctify the earth, "and complete the salvation of man." What does it mean to complete the salvation of man?

It means to give the righteous the fulness and bring them into the house of the Lord and crown them with glory and all of that. "And judge all things and shall redeem all things, except that which he hath not put into his power, when he shall have sealed all things, unto the end of all things." And the word "End" ought to be capitalized. Why? Who is the End of all things? Who is the beginning and the End? It's Christ. So you seal all things to the End of all things.

This is also what is meant by "enduring to the End." "The End" is Christ.

"And the sounding of the trumpets of the seven angels are the preparing and finishing of his work, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years." After the opening of the seventh seal, the beginning of it, "the preparing of the way before the time of his coming." So Christ does not [make His world appearance in the events tied to] the opening of the seventh seal. You have the half hour of silence [with all] the judgments, and all this designed to do what? To sanctify the earth, to complete the salvation of man. This is the harvest season, this is the parable of the wheat and the tares, to bring them into the church of the Firstborn, give them full blessings of exaltation. And all this in the seventh thousand years.

We should have put that one in. Going from there to Revelation 10, John has a special ministry on that. And that ministry is depicted in a little book that is given to him. He is told to eat it, and it has some interesting tastes in relation to it, which are referred to there. But it symbolizes the mission that he is given, and for this he was translated…

That's chapter 10. What's chapter 11 about? The second coming of Christ is actually a ***series of events,*** that he comes first of all to Zion. That appearance to Zion—actually there will be ***multiple appearances.*** The book of Mormon twice—once in 3 Nephi 20, and the other in 3 Nephi 21 talks about Christ coming to Zion. He indicates that when the New Jerusalem is built and the power of God descends upon them, then he makes this statement—verse 25 of 3 Nephi 21, "Then shall the power of heaven come down among them, and I also will be in the midst." He said that before, in 3 Nephi 20. So it's in this period of time when Zion is cleansed and Christ comes and dwells with his saints.

Technically, this is the beginning of the millennium [for the Saints, for] He lives among them. They will have the blessings of Christ's appearance. They will have him coming to them in this period of time. So in a way, Christ does come somewhere around the opening of the 7th seal. He doesn't come to the world, he will come to the faithful Latter-day Saints who have been cleansed, and keep in mind that somewhere between now and then the righteous remnant has to be cleansed and prepared. The New Jerusalem has to be established, and then Christ will come, just like Isaiah says in Isaiah 59. You need to read verse 19 as well as 20. Nineteen refers to the warfare against Zion. And then verse 20 refers to Christ coming to Zion in the last days.

President Nelson just challenged us to become this people and President Eyring recently told the sisters that their children and grandchildren they have raised (past tense) would be at the center of creating this New Jerusalem in Jackson County.

[Going to Isaiah] verse 19: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood," and that's the great and abominable church gathering multitudes to make war against Zion, "the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." What does Nephi see happen when the enemy comes against the Saints? The power of God in great glory rests upon them. Then in the next verse he says, "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob." You remember also we read that statement from Moroni, Moroni's visit to Joseph on the hill Cumorah, where he says that the Saints will be persecuted until they finally receive an inheritance where the glory of the Lord rests upon them. And when this takes place, he says, then the ten tribes will be revealed in the north country. Then he says, "And when this takes place, then will be fulfilled the words of Isaiah, the Redeemer shall come to Zion and to those that turn from ungodliness in Jacob."

So Christ will come to faithful Latter-day Saints very near to the time of the opening of the seventh seal in [the New Jerusalem]. How far is that in the future? I leave that for you to work out. So he comes in that respect to them.

Then as the 144,000 do their work and bring people into the church of the Firstborn and they are sanctified and given those higher priesthood blessings in the house of the Lord, when this is done and when their work is done, then Christ will come suddenly to his temple. In other words, "suddenly" didn't mean suddenly after Malachi's day.

It means suddenly after that work is done. Christ will then come to his temple [which is the end of Revelation chapter 7].

They've got to be brought in to the church of the Firstborn, they've got to be given fulness of priesthood and the promises and guarantees relating to that. They've got to be given those things. Then Christ comes to his temple and puts the capstone on, and that will take place after the ministry of the 144,000, [surrounding the throne an unnumerable host].

The next thing that's necessary is to build Zion and put the capstone on, and then you have to go to Adam-ondi-Ahman, and then you've got to seal the other dispensations into and under the canopy of this dispensation, and that makes the dispensation of the fulness of dispensations. And it's just like the Prophet said here on page 168 of the *Teachings*—"Again God has purposed in himself that there should not be an eternal fulness until every dispensation should be fulfilled and gathered together in one." So you've got to gather all past dispensations into this dispensation. And when you do, it makes the dispensation of the fulness of dispensations. Or another way of saying it is the dispensation of the fulness of times. The words "dispensation" and "times" being synonymous.

Where is that done? That's done at Adam-ondi-Ahman. And can you fulfill all things and gather them to a fulness if the capstone hasn't been

put on, if Zion hasn't indeed been [redeemed and] made an order of Kings and Priest and Queens and Priestesses? The capstone hasn't been put on. This has to be done ***before*** the great council at Adam-ondi-Ahman, and it has to take place after the ministry of the 144,000.

When the ministry of the 144,000 is over, then the great prophecy of Malachi will be filled where the Lord will come suddenly to his temple. Then after that, the great Daniel vision of Daniel 7 where he sees the ancient of days come and the Adam-ondi-Ahman council.

And there's the judgment that's set, and then you begin to look around and say, "Now how are we going to prepare people for the second coming?" The Prophet here in the *Teachings,* page 157, deals with that. He expresses it this way. He says, "Daniel in his 7th chapter speaks of the Ancient of Days. He means the oldest man, our Father Adam, Michael. He will call his children together and hold a council with them," and note this now, "to prepare them for the coming of the Son of God." Now, how does he prepare them? He prepares them as the Prophet Joseph says in relation to the book of Revelation, where you "seal all things to the End of all things." You seal all things to Christ.

How do you seal all things to Christ? You start out and you seal all things to Joseph first, just like the scriptures indicate. Then this whole order of things, you have a program where the first is last and the last is first. Note where the Lord says here in Section 29:30, "And remember that all my judgments are not given unto men...that the first shall be last, and that the last shall be first in all things whatsoever I have created by the word of my power, which is the power of my Spirit."

Then turn over to Matthew 19 verse 27 where the Savior is talking to his disciples, and the Apostle Peter, a little impetuous, looks at his life of persecution and his following the Savior and wonders what he's going to get out of it. I guess that's a legitimate wonder, and he expresses that. He says, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, shall, in the resurrection, when the Son of man shall come sitting on the throne of his glory, ye shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The judgment isn't that you are rewarded to be a Bishop in the celestial kingdom or a Stake President in the celestial kingdom, or one of the Brethren like lots of people want to be in the celestial kingdom.

Instead, he says, "And everyone that has forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold and shall inherit everlasting life." In other words, you perfect the Holy Order, the family order, and a man may have a family relationship over his physical posterity and he may be a father spiritually like Abraham over others, and those who have forsaken the world and followed the Lord will be given a hundredfold of fathers and mothers, etc., because they have a presidency within the Holy Order.

And then note what he says in verse 30. "But many of the first shall be last," in this judgment of things, "and the last first." Now, who is the last dispensation? Who presides over it? Who is going to put the capstone on finally? And when he gets the capstone on and the Holy Order is completed, and you go to Adam-ondi-Ahman and you visit around with Peter. And Peter says, "Hey, we didn't do it." Joseph says, "Hey, I've got a way. I know a way to do that. You be sealed to me and come in to my dispensation and become part of it, and we've still got people working around on earth doing temple work. We'll have your people's work done for them." So Peter's dispensation is brought to completion in the fulness, in Joseph. And Moses says the same thing. And the Jaredites say the same thing. And the Nephites say the same thing. And Enoch comes up a little bit shy, great and glorious as he is, and says, "You know, we did pretty good, but we didn't quite cut it, Brother Joseph." Joseph says, "That's fine, you come on in, too." And the last becomes first. And all dispensations are gathered into the dispensation of the fulness of times—to make the dispensation of the fulness of times.

This is done at Adam-ondi-Ahman. When this takes place, then you are ready to go to [Old] Jerusalem. The Jewish people haven't yet as a nation been brought in. So you are ready to go in the great prophetic timetable to Jerusalem. So John sees in the 11th chapter of the book of Revelation, these two prophets who are sent to Jerusalem during the period of the Abomination of Desolation in the last days. He sees that. And he sees their ministry. He sees the power of the Spirit that they have, and this is a day of power. They have that spiritual power with their ministry, and he sees the power of the Spirit that they have. And this is a day of power. And they have that spiritual power with them. In the meantime there has been gathered to Jerusalem many Jewish converts. And there is a Jewish church made up of Jewish converts, the covenant people of the Lord that Nephi saw, on whom the power of God in great glory rested as well as upon the Latter-day Saints.

They flee to Jerusalem, and by their faith—I'm getting a little ahead of the story, because all don't stay there. But those who stay support by their faith these two prophets. It takes power of faith to perform the works of righteousness that they perform. And they hold in abeyance these great forces that gather against Jerusalem. As they do, finally these forces overrun the city. These two prophets are then killed and lie in the street.

As they are killed and lie in the street for a period of time, the revelation says that their dead bodies lie in the street for 3 1/2 days, "and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them" (see Rev. 11:9–10.) —you'll get the media going there, and everyone will be happy that those two guys have finally been taken care of.

So they send gifts back and forth to each other, and they get all ready and celebrate before they go in to mop up the Jewish people. But just about that point, Christ stands on the Mount of Olives. "And after three days and a half, the Spirit of life from God entered into them." When Christ stands upon the Mount of Olives, that signals the resurrection of the righteous. With that great cataclysmic upheaval taking place, the graves of the righteous will be opened. What happens to those two prophets who are lying in the street? They get resurrected too.

It says in verse 12, "And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand; and the remnant were affrighted and gave glory to the God of heaven."

These events, then, center in [Old] Jerusalem.

Whenever the Lord ordains an earth be created and inhabited or populated, along with that ordination is the ordination that there will be two great centers of power. One will be called Jerusalem and the other will be called Mount Zion. And the Jerusalem and the Mount Zion that are to be built on this earth are patterns of an eternal plan. The Prophet Joseph Smith makes this comment in the *Teachings,* page 12: "A man may be saved after the judgment in the terrestrial kingdom or in the telestial kingdom. But he can never see the celestial kingdom of God without being born of the water and the Spirit." Now, note his added comment: "He may receive a glory like the moon or like the stars, but he can never come to Mount Zion." He's talking about getting your head above the veil and back there. Mount Zion is up there, really. The Mount Zion here is merely the funneling down of knowledge and truth and building an order of things that approximate that one up there.

He's talking about the blessings of the Second Comforter. "He can never come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem." There are two—Mount Zion and the Heavenly Jerusalem. Let me give you a reference here from 3 Nephi 20, and this is another reason why when you study the Book of Mormon, read every word and then read those words backwards if you have to, and upside down and over and crosswise, because every word becomes important at points.

In 3 Nephi 20, he's talking about the great judgments that are associated with and finally consummated in the building of the New Jerusalem on this earth and the sanctification of Jerusalem in Palestine, and the establishment of the great world order of millennial righteousness where the law goes forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

He says this in verse 36: "And then shall be brought to pass that which is written:" and he quotes Isaiah here. But he adds something to him. "Awake, awake again"—the word "again" is not in Isaiah. Jesus put it in. "Awake, awake again, and put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city, for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, sit down, O Jerusalem; loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion."

Now, you ask yourself this question: Whenever before in this mortal period of time, from the days of Adam down, have we had Zion and Jerusalem rise to become universal powers in the earth? When did that happen the first time? In the latter-day when it happens, it's going to be the *second* time it happens. "Awake, awake again"—do it over again! Do it over again the second time. "Awake, awake again and put on strength. When did it happen the first time that Zion arose in power and Jerusalem to become a universal order, a millennial system? When did it happen? Well, it didn't. Its not talking about the first time being in mortality, and that's the thing I want you to see now.

We've said before earlier, that the general pattern of warfare against Zion has two main divisions or two main thrusts or attacks. One is the warfare against Zion in America and the elements of Zion throughout the world by the multitudes of the abominable church that gather against them. They don't overrun us, they cleanse us, they do us good and kick us into the dust and bat us over the head with a 4 x 4, and they do a lot of other things. But they merely cleanse the righteous and sanctify them.

And out of that whole difficulty you establish the New Jerusalem [this is primarily what Revelation chapter 12 covers]. Then after we've established the New Jerusalem and Satan has failed in that purpose, then he knows there can't be an eternal fulness unless the two cities are established in righteousness and power. And he knows that if he can thwart the work of the Lord at [Old] Jerusalem, he can in some measure gain a tactical advantage and prevent the Lord from reigning in full glory and power. So he then shifts his gears, and all nations are gathered against [Old] Jerusalem.

For a more complete breakdown of Revelation chapter 12, read *Section V: Understanding Revelation.*

There are 3 great gatherings spoken of. Here in the *Teachings,* page 231, the Prophet puts it this way: "The three great gatherings, the Saints of God will be gathered in one from every nation. The Jews will be gathered together in one, and the wicked will also be gathered together to be destroyed, as spoken of by the prophets." Now, what prophet speaks of it? Well, John the Revelator does. Joel does. Isaiah does. They speak of the gathering to Jerusalem to be destroyed.

So when Lucifer can't achieve his purposes in relation to Zion, he gathers all nations against Jerusalem in a great zealous attack against the Jewish people. And he would succeed, too, except Christ stands upon the Mount of Olives.

**Revelation 12**

**14** Therefore to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might flee into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. (Redemption of Zion)

**15** And the serpent casteth out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. (Satan trying to take out Zion)

**16** And the earth helpeth the woman, and the earth openeth her mouth, and swalloweth up the flood which the dragon casteth out of his mouth. (Lord protects Zion)

**17** Therefore the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have also the testimony of Jesus Christ. (Satan shifts tactics)

Then when that happens, in the latter-days the scene will shift to Jerusalem. And that's what the rest of chapter 12 is all about. He sees the scene shift to Jerusalem. As it does, there is a church there in Jerusalem.

In the meantime, what's going on in Zion? We are endeavoring to gear ourselves with power to do that final thing—take the rascal and throw him out! The second time! We want to do that. So we are gearing up in spiritual power. Then in the great events of Zion, the council of Adam-ondi-Ahman, etc., the judgment is set and things are ready for the second coming.

The Savior takes a group of people from Mount Zion. He says, "Come on, boys, it's time now to go to Jerusalem. We have now got the faith to develop among these people necessary to do the job." So he takes a group of people of the Saints. Heber C. Kimball said he was going to be there, anyway, and others. And he takes them and they go and stand on the Mount of Olives just in the nick of time. And they overthrow the forces of darkness. And they sanctify the Jews, they cleanse Jerusalem. They rebuild the temple, and they sanctify it. They administer the ordinances of the temple and they give fulness of priesthood to the Jewish people. And they prepare them by bringing them into the church of the Firstborn.

All of this is preparatory work. They've stopped the forces and the powers there by Christ coming to the Mount of Olives. They then do this, and when they have done that and the Jewish people are brought into the church of the Firstborn, then Christ comes in his glory. Then those who are righteous on earth are caught up to meet him, the resurrection of the righteous having previously taken place, just as Paul says—We which are alive shall not prevent those who are dead, for the dead in Christ shall rise first. (see 1 Thes. 4:15–16)

Isaiah says, as quoted by the Savior, "Awake, awake, *again*!" Let's do it again now, boys! Awake, awake again, put on righteousness! And bring these two great poles of power back on this earth, into being, to usher in a millennial era on this earth, of righteousness and peace.

Revelation 14

"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion," and this is Zion established finally upon her Mount in glory and power, "and with him a hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps; And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders; and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand." They have a unique and distinct position with the Lord.

They are they in the Holy Order who are sealed immediately and directly to him, just like the Lord promised the twelve in Luke 20. "Ye are they who will eat at my same table." They are sealed directly in the Holy Order. And they have a role that is unique and distinct.

So he sees Christ stand upon Mount Zion, and he sees the 144,000, and he is taught that they are a distinct body, and he says, "These are they which are not defiled with women; for they are virgins." (see Rev. 14:4.) And some people think they are all a bunch of bachelors, [I guess] they've never heard the story of the ten virgins, [those virgins] include men and women—[how do they square that? No...] The word "virgin" here merely means "sanctified one." And they are they who have fulness of priesthood, and you don't give fulness of priesthood except to a man and a woman combined together jointly [sealed by the power in

the temple]. So they are all good, married guys, believe that, brethren, these are all good married folk.

But they are called virgins because of their purity. He says, "And they are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." They have that relationship. "These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb." They stand as the first fruits, eat at the same table, are sealed in the Holy Order immediately to Christ. ***"And in their mouth was found no guile;*** for they are without fault before the throne of God."

Now, in order to bring this about, this great division where he sees Mount Zion and the 144,000, then he sees that the means of bringing this about would be the restoration of [Joseph Smith] in the last days. So he says in verse 6: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come...."

The great division is then underway and taking place and it is brought about by the [the return of Joseph Smith and the blowing of his trump], by [that] angel to all the earth.

Now note what he says, verse 13: "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

**D&C 63**

**47** He that is faithful and endureth shall overcome the world.

**48** He that sendeth up treasures unto the land of Zion shall receive an inheritance in this world, and his works shall follow him, and also a reward in the world to come.

**49** Yea, and blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth, when the Lord shall come, and old things shall pass away, and all things become new, ***they shall rise from the dead and shall not die after, and shall receive an inheritance before the Lord, in the holy city.*** ...

**52** Wherefore, ***for this cause preached the apostles unto the world the resurrection of the dead.***

**53** ***These things are the things that ye must look for;*** and, speaking after the manner of the Lord, they are now nigh at hand, and in a time to come, even in the day of the coming of the Son of Man.

**54** And until that hour there will be foolish virgins among the wise; and at that hour cometh an entire separation of the righteous and the wicked; and in that day will I send mine angels to pluck out the wicked and cast them into unquenchable fire.

When the Lord is referring to healing a dead man, He is referring to the resurrection. But not only that, we gain another bit of crucial information regarding this event (i.e., Joseph Smith's resurrection and restoration/return) in regard to last day timelines and prophecies. And that is found in verse 52 and 53. The Lord says here that this is the reason why the apostles preached the resurrection of the dead, for the resurrection of the dead (or more specifically the resurrection of a specific person) is "the thing that ye must look for" in the last days and this is obviously not talking about Jesus because he has been resurrected for almost 2000 years. The Lord then in the year 1831 says that these things are ***close at hand,*** speaking "after the manner of the Lord", which means it might be a while for those in 1831 to see it but that this/these resurrections were ***post*** 1831, ruling out people such as Moroni. Why is this the thing we must look for and prepare ourselves for?

[Because this kickstarts] the gathering of the wheat [into the garners, i.e. the Redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem and the gathering into it]. You [are seeing] the great division, you [are seeing] that division that [was prophesied to take place] produced by the angel flying through the midst of heaven.

[We will next] see the proclamation that Babylon is fallen.

This, then, is the great division, the great division seen by John [who then] sees the 144,000 stand on Mount Zion. And he sees that they are a select group, and he sees that they sing a new song. He sees that they are sealed directly and are directly related to the Christ. Then he shifts and sees how this is all brought about—***the angel, flying through the midst of Heaven.*** And after that, Babylon is said to fall. Then he finally sees specifically the gathering of the righteous and the gathering of the wicked. And in the gathering of the wicked, they are gathered to Jerusalem to be destroyed, and in that destruction, the destruction is so devastating and so gruesome that blood runs to the bridle of a horse's bit. That's how it is.

So the book of Revelation deals with what? It deals with fulfilling this great objective of making this earth a celestial orb. It deals with the great gathering of the righteous in the latter-days, the harvest season where you gather the righteous into the church of the Firstborn, and where the wicked are gathered together finally at Jerusalem to be destroyed. He sees that marvelous thing.

It's "one of the plainest books God ever caused to be written." [*Teachings,* p. 290] It's as easy to understand as the Ally Oop comic strip—if you read it in the right context.

May the Lord bless you, my brothers and sisters. It's been a thrill to be with you. I feel that he has given me strength—when I got here the other day I felt like I was just about half sick and ready with a real throat problem, and I asked the Lord to help me on this one. And I believe he has. I believe he has.

I just want you to know that I know the gospel is true. I know that Jesus is the Christ with an absolute knowledge. I know that this is his work. ***I know that the greatest responsibility of the Latter-day Saints is to yield obedience to the living prophet and join with him hand in hand in the program that he has inaugurated, and that goes, too, with the Stake President and the Bishop. You can't build Zion on your own... So please, brothers and sisters, unite, get away from the cliques, get away from the special hobby*** situation, get the vision of Zion, get on fire, get your home teaching done with the Spirit of the Lord in your life. Get your welfare programs, be generous in your consecrations, live the temple covenants, join together with a oneness that comes from the Spirit of the Lord and the love that's born of the love of Christ and the power of his Spirit in your life, and let's build Zion.

I bear you my testimony that God does live, and this is his work and that Ezra Taft Benson [President Russell M. Nelson] is his prophet, and that your respective Stake Presidents are called of God and have the mantle of God—let's get this great vision of things.

You know, the Book of Mormon is a miracle. When you think of all this stuff put in there in clarification in one working period of 75 days or less, producing a document that does all this—and I haven't even gotten started yet! I haven't! I've run out of time and I have hardly gotten started yet.

All of this comes in the Book of Mormon, and there's a lot more. How Joseph Smith got that all packed in there and put in proper perspective in so fine a way and with so precise a language as it opens up the vision of things, how did he do that except by infinite intelligence and knowledge—how did he do that? ***He was [and is] a Prophet of God.*** If there has ever been a prophet of God, it was he. He was a greater Prophet than Moses, and greater Seer than Samuel. He had a more dramatic rise out of humble circumstances than Abraham Lincoln, and he, and not Emerson, is our wisest American. ***And he is our Prophet, and I love him. I love to hear his voice—the Spirit bearing witness of him.***

I have studied him all my life. I know that he was a Prophet of God, and I know this work is true. I bear that testimony in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.